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JOHN BULL

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WOMAN'S REALM

FREE SPEECH

Where Do You Go To Put Your Feet Up?

What name should we give to our main downstairs room? The children call it the front room, my wife calls it the sitting-room, the neighbours call it the drawing-room and I say "the lounge."

But none of these terms is quite right. The front room sounds an awfully cold, Sunday-afternoon kind of place; a sitting-room should be full of chintz and mellowing photographs; we certainly don't withdraw pretentiously to the drawing-room, and a lounge reminds me of a room in a vast chromium road-house. Certainly none of us wants to call it the living-room, a term which smacks of sandwiches and stale tobacco smoke.

But what *should* I call the place where I struggle to read the paper, my wife darns, the children fight and watch TV—and by the opulence of which my neighbours estimate my income?

F. SHAW, HUDDERSFIELD, YORKS.

★ ★ ★

Whose Bee?

If my dog breaks into a neighbour's garden and bites him, I'm in trouble. But if my neighbour keeps bees—as mine does—which at times make my garden uninhabitable, have I a remedy? Last year his bees swarmed on to one of my trees. He soon collected them, but for days anybody venturing out was sure to be stung by some he'd missed.

C. H., ILFORD, ESSEX.

"You can't do anything about it," says a lawyer. "Bees aren't domestic pets you can keep 'under reasonable control'—as on a leash. And you'd have a job to prove whose bee had stung you."

★ ★ ★

Love Light

When I was a girl, forty years ago, couples did their courting out of the public eye. But today they cuddle in cinemas, buses, cars—and don't even wait for the dark. We kept *our* kisses for the parlour or lovers' lane. It seems love is no longer in a mist—it's in the limelight.

MRS. JANE LEWIS, HULL, YORKS.

. . . What has happened to the grand old British habit of lovers walking arm-in-arm? It seems to have completely died out—and given place to that frightful American custom of pulling the girl along by her fingertips.

P. J. SMITH, YORK ROAD, BRISTOL, 6.

★ ★ ★

The Air Line

Your article about the Clifton Suspension Bridge ("Watch On The Cliffs Of Death," July 19) reminded me of the story of a young woman who jumped off the bridge and lived. Her dress acted as a parachute and she floated down to safety.

R. DURSLEY, ASH GROVE, FISHPONDS, BRISTOL.

It happened in 1885. The girl, who had been told that her sweetheart was going abroad, is the only person to have jumped from the bridge deliberately and survived. Her crinoline partly checked her fall. She recovered—and lived on for sixty-three years.

★ ★ ★

Help, Police

As a mental welfare officer I was very interested in Fred Sullivan's series "Emergency Call To Danger." But I was surprised to find how quickly London County Council officers call in

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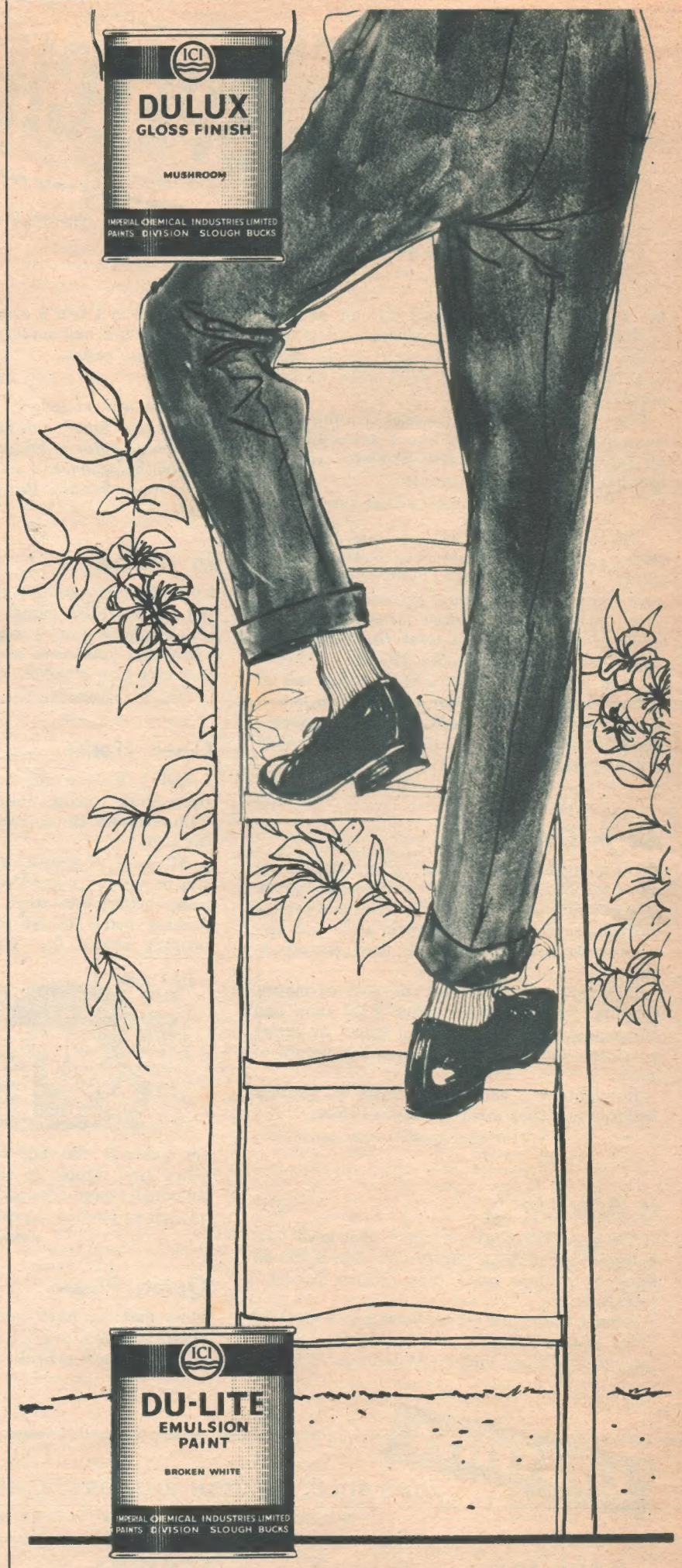

When man paints house man needs

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FREE SPEECH

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the police to help them with difficult patients. In this small provincial area, where we deal with about two hundred cases a year, I can recall only three occasions in ten years when we have asked for police aid.

Our nearest mental hospital is thirty-five miles away, so we have an hour's journey before we can rid ourselves of responsibility—and we, too, have our "tough" customers.

JOHN DUNFORD, SOKE OF PETERBOROUGH.

"We get a far higher proportion of dangerous patients in London," says Fred Sullivan. "It's partly because of the mixed, cosmopolitan population, which has more persecution-complex cases; partly because chronic mental cases often make for London. They think they can escape from their troubles in the big city.

"And it's harder to get a violent type out of a sixth-floor tenement than a small-town house. But we only call the police as a last resort—about a hundred times a year, out of more than seven thousand cases."

All In One

What a waste envelopes are! Every day in my office we throw 250 into the waste-paper basket. It would be a good idea if both firms and private individuals did away with them and used air-letter style notepaper for all their correspondence.

It would save the cost of the envelopes, simplify mailing—saving office girls' time and eliminating the risk of putting letters in wrong envelopes—and give the postman less weight to carry.

It might even encourage brevity in business letters— and that *would* be a good thing.

W. R. WARDLE, QUESLETT ROAD, BIRMINGHAM.

It Adds Up

It's a good job hospitals make their own tests before giving a blood transfusion, even if you do think you know your type ("Free Speech," July 26).

After a blood test eleven years ago I was told I was Rhesus negative; after another test sixteen months ago I was told I was positive. Between the two tests I had a transfusion. I'm still here to tell the tale, but surely such errors could have unfortunate results.

MRS. J. S. H., WEST BRIDGFORD, NOTTINGHAM.

"There was no danger," says a blood specialist. "A positive patient can be given negative blood. There is no harm in a negative patient being given positive blood once; a second wrong transfusion could mean trouble. But further tests are always made."

In A Flash

I used to fear thunder ("Free Speech," August 2) but the air raids cured me. Since this remedy isn't available now, it might help your reader to know that you never see the flash of lightning that kills you; it travels too fast.

MRS. E. J. HAMBURGER, LANCASTER TERRACE, LONDON, W.2.

Open House

I feel I have a lot in common with Betsy Innes-Smith whose stately home is open to visitors (JOHN BULL, July 19). *My* home is up for sale.

All kinds of people call on us. If it rains we can be sure of a few "viewers" who really only want shelter; then there are the old dears with nothing better to do than poke round other people's houses, the "friends" looking us over

for someone else, and the neighbours who for years have wanted to see inside our home. If we could charge admission we would have made enough to pay the deposit on our new home.

MARGARET TUNNADINE, PORTSMOUTH.

Quiet, Please

Now that we have smokeless zones, why not noiseless zones, too?

The planners provide water, lighting, drainage and power services in streets and blocks of flats; why not freedom from noise, which is necessary to the health of thousands of night workers?

Is it beyond the experts to provide suitable accommodation for them?

It would not only increase their efficiency at work, it would improve their tempers—and in wet school holidays help their harassed wives.

WESLEY D. BROOME, COMO ROAD, FOREST HILL, LONDON.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

HERE'S a lesson in gardening strategy! By the time Father's filled that deceptively capacious playpool, turned the spray playfully on the coolly calculating trio and then rushed off to change so that he can join the hosing-down party himself, there will be more puddles on the lawn than paddles in the pool. But who cares? "Certainly not that far-sighted father," says Heseltine. "The grass is as parched as the perennials—and he didn't inflate that pool and leave it lying about for nothing. . . ."

Bachelor Tax

The present policy of making young bachelors pay high income tax is most unfair. It stops people getting married.

Young men who are saving to set up home take longer to do so. Surely it would be fairer to grade the tax so that it rose sharply with increasing age.

JOHN ELLIS, ANCHORAGE CLOSE, WIMBLEDON, LONDON.

Men Of Steel

Nearly every time a British soldier is killed in Cyprus I notice that he has been shot in the back or chest, rarely in the legs or head.

So why can't the army provide our boys with bullet-proof jackets?

Chicago gangsters knew the value of such protection years ago, and it seems such an obvious safety measure I'm at a loss to see why the War Office don't adopt it.

Or is that just the reason? It's *so* obvious that the pukka brass hats aren't interested; they prefer to live in the past?

MRS. T. SPENCER, WOLVERHAMPTON.

"We tried armoured vests in Korea with great success," says the War Office. "They cut casualties by a fifth. But they are protection only against flying fragments.

"People call them bullet-proof, but there's no such thing. And in Cyprus and Malaya, where the danger is from bullets, they would be too hot to wear."

JOHN BULL pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the JOHN BULL Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post.

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I am Miss Britain, but never again. It's a tough fight on the way up—and agony when you're there

So you think it's fun to be a beauty queen?

by LEILA WILLIAMS

NEXT Wednesday I shall be going to Morecambe to hand over my title of "Miss Great Britain" to the new winner. It will be the end of my career as a beauty queen. I shan't be competing again.

There are plenty of reasons. They all add up to the fact that the beauty queen game is hard going. The strain is bad enough on the way to the top. It's terrific trying to stay there. When I found myself looking at newspaper photographs of my rivals, studying their attractions and comparing them with my own—that's when I decided to retire.

Whatever people say about beauty competitions, they have really come into their own in Britain during the last few years. Some girls have become professional beauty queens, entering for competitions in towns and seaside resorts all over the country and living through the season on their winnings. They really have to work for a living. Whenever I hear somebody running down a beauty queen I always think, "I wonder how *you'd* get on if *you* had a go at walking out in a swimsuit in front of a thousand gaping spectators and trying to look like Jayne Mansfield on a freezing cold day when you were breaking out in goose pimples."

There is quite a lot of money to be picked up; I won £2,000 in three years and I consider that I earned it. Experience and the right technique can bring better results than a boy friend on the judging panel. I've often spent a day in London, just choosing a swimsuit and shoes to match.

One girl I knew kept herself in trim by taking up weight-lifting and gymnastics through the season. Another spent hours posing in front of a mirror before each event. She always took about a minute to arrange her legs in the best position. Once she lost her balance and almost fell over during a big contest. She had to start all over again.

Even when you win it's not always such a picnic as you'd imagine. When I became "Miss Blackpool" in 1956, the contest was held on the day after the "Miss Great Britain" competition at

Morecambe, in which I'd come second. The judges at Blackpool were a long time making up their minds. We paraded for the last time a few seconds before I was supposed to arrive in Morecambe to make a series of personal appearances with the previous day's winner.

As I put on a special smile for the judges, I saw the publicity manager from Morecambe standing behind them. He looked frantic.

When the verdict was given I was crowned in a hurry, then rushed off to join the others at Morecambe. We were simply bundled into the nearest theatre. I came out on stage still wearing the same smile I'd used at Blackpool. I hadn't had time to remove it.

For the next couple of hours we were rushed between every theatre and cinema in the place. I was still wearing the same fixed Blackpool smile when we trooped out on the stage of the last cinema. The big picture had finished ten minutes before.

A few weeks earlier I had been the runner-up in an ITV beauty contest. When I walked up in full view of the cameras to receive a plaque and a rosette, all I could do was to stand in front of the master of ceremonies with my hands crossed over my shoulders. He must have thought I was paralysed. After the programme the producer naturally wanted to know why I'd been so reluctant to take the prizes. I told him: "As I was walking up my shoulder strap broke."

Anybody who thinks that winning a beauty competition is just a matter of luck, assisted by the right answers from a tape measure, ought to try going in for one. Most of the girls start their preparations hours before they appear in public. In all the big contests the judges go for personality as well as the way you look, and the winner is quite often not the prettiest girl but the one with the most poise. Just before the final stages of a big event, it's by no means out of the ordinary for a girl to prepare for the ordeal with a swig from a bottle of brandy.

Every competition has a different set of rules —the problem nearly always is how to get round them. Such artificial aids as waspies are usually banned; when they aren't anything can happen. A little while ago somebody complained that the three finalists in a competition for redheads hadn't been that colour for more than forty-eight hours. But last year three finalists in a "Queen of Light" competition had to sign a contract to stay blonde for a year.

Like most beauty queens I've always been superstitious and when I got to Morecambe last year for my third try at "Miss Great Britain," the first thing I did was to see a gipsy at the fairground. But I was disappointed; the gipsy said that nearly every girl in the contest had been to her tent, and they all wanted to be told they would win. As far as "Miss Great Britain" was concerned, her crystal was definitely out of business.

Later I went to see another fortune teller, after muffling myself up. This time I came away satisfied; I was told it was going to be the happiest day of my life.

But I had a heavy cold, I'd recently had a long losing run, and I was surprised when I managed to get into the last six. As we went out for the finals the tension was awful. I was sure my smile was going to crack. I badly wanted to scream. When somebody put a sash over my head, all I could do was to shout "Oh no!" and burst into tears.

After the competition the Mayor of Walsall, my home town, organized a civic reception to welcome me back. He wanted me to appear on the town hall balcony in a swimsuit. The idea was opposed by a woman alderman who said that a civic reception for a beauty queen wasn't dignified, and that I had done nothing to deserve the honour except to stand around a bathing pool with next to nothing on. While everybody was arguing about it I was spending a week in bed suffering from exhaustion.

Nearly everybody seems to have a crazy idea that if a girl happens to have the kind of statistics and face which go to the making of a beauty queen, that girl must have something wrong with her. Either she's half-witted, or ill-mannered, or something. It's a kind of law.

Not long ago I was invited to open a church fête in a country village. As soon as the vicar shook hands with me I could tell that he was nervous. He'd made up his mind that because I was a beauty queen I was certain to throw a fit of temperament.

He looked really terrible when I got up in front of the microphone to declare the fête open. But after I'd said my piece he looked better—he looked almost human. He was obviously thinking: *Thank heaven—the girl isn't so dumb after all.*

A friend of mine happened to mention my name to a film agent last year. The agent turned round and looked at her as if she was mad. "You don't mean to say you're actually trying to sell me a beauty queen?"

A BARMAID in my father's pub persuaded me to enter for my first beauty contest. I hoped that if I won some money I could spend it on training for the stage. I paraded in an evening dress for the first heat, and won. But when I appeared in the final the judges weren't impressed.

I couldn't help trying to prove that they were wrong. I entered more contests and won. In my first year I was Miss Walsall and Miss Birmingham University, but every time I won I wanted to go on for something bigger and better. It was like a drug.

My father pinned press photographs of the events I was in on the walls of the public bar. The regulars always celebrated when I won. When I lost they criticized the looks of the winner and said that the judges must have been drunk, or blind.

The climax came last October when I took part in the Miss World contest in London. Or maybe you would call it an anti-climax. I shared a room with Miss Japan in an hotel near the Strand where we were all guarded by chaperones for a week before the event.

The organizers wanted everybody to see us. They arranged a terrific programme of personal appearances and sightseeing tours. We didn't get a moment's peace.

The tension was murder. The Continental girls just ignored the set times and wouldn't make an appearance until they were happy about their make-up. About half of us, including myself, caught Asian flu.

Just before we were all supposed to meet the Lord Mayor of London, wearing our national costumes, there was a great panic; nobody knew which was the national dress for Great Britain. Somebody called in a theatrical costumier and I was eventually rigged out like the Duchess of Devonshire in the famous painting.

I went with a group of Continentals to the Prince of Wales Theatre. Sabrina was in the show.

The Continental girls were fascinated by her vital statistics. They all went round to her dressing-room after the performance to make sure that these were genuine. They came away only too pleased that she wasn't in the contest.

Soon after Miss World was chosen I sold my swimsuits in aid of charity. None of them had ever been wet, apart from their visits to the laundry. I've always been terrified of swimming pools. I've never swum in any, and I never dared to go too near the edge for fear of being pushed in.

THE END

Leila Williams kicks off at a football match. For the Miss World contest she appeared at theatres and on publicity trips. "We didn't get a moment's peace"

At a party Leila chats to Jean Clarke (left), who won a beauty title—and decided to become a model

Yes—we can banish the rocket

by DR. P. E. HODGSON

We must set the trap to catch the nuclear bootlegger before destruction hurtles out of the blue . . .

THE nightmare that faces the world is destruction by rocket. Is it technically possible to dispel the nightmare by outlawing the rocket as a weapon?

If the statesmen of the world should agree to the ban, could scientists ensure that it was being enforced? Could they detect if it were broken by any one nation?

There are ways in which this might be done. To guide a rocket to its target its speed and position must be found and compared with what they should be to bring it down in the desired area. If they differ, the necessary adjustments to the steering mechanism must be calculated and made.

All this rather complicated process has to be completed in a fraction of a second, before the rocket gets too far off course. Indeed, such calculations must be made continually during the flight, to eliminate the effects of unexpected disturbances.

A short-range rocket can be tracked from the ground by radar, and the required adjustments can be calculated electronically and radioed out to the steering mechanism. But the long-range rockets soon get beyond radar control. It then becomes necessary to have all the tracking and computing mechanism inside the rocket itself.

A number of possible internal navigation systems for rockets have been suggested. The one most likely to be used in rockets of the future is known as "inertial guidance." Unlike the others, it does not rely on any beams or signals outside the rocket itself and so cannot be jammed or misguided by false signals.

Its main principle can be grasped by recalling the sensations experienced when going up or down in a lift. Although the passenger is completely shut in, he knows when he is moving. If the lift is going up he feels heavier at the beginning of the journey; if he suddenly goes down he experiences a feeling of lightness.

The accelerations which cause these sensations can be measured and, if the duration of the sensations is known, it is quite easy to calculate how far the lift has moved.

A rocket can move in several directions, so it is necessary to have three accelerometers set at right angles to each other to keep track of the rocket's position.

In addition, it can rotate on its own axis, and since this rotation would spoil the measurements the accelerometers are mounted on a platform kept in a fixed orientation in space by means of a set of gyroscopes.

The guidance mechanism is therefore extremely complicated, and this may provide the best hope of controlling the production of rockets through some form of international inspection. No system of control is possible, of course, until the political difficulties have been overcome, and there are also technical problems.

The purpose of any inspection system must be to ensure that there can be no illegal production of the weapon. The complexity of the accelerometers and gyroscopes used in the inertial guidance system makes them peculiarly suited to this type of control.

A major manufacturing effort is needed to make them in large numbers and only a few firms in any country would have the skilled staff and the precision equipment needed. Thus, only a relatively small number of inspectors would be required.

We now know enough about rockets to rule out most of the alternative methods of outlawing the weapon. There is little chance of intercepting and destroying a rocket before it reaches its target. It is unlikely that its approach would be detected until it was hundreds of miles above the earth and travelling at several thousand miles an hour.

Even electronically controlled intercepting rockets, automatically dispatched when the attacking rocket was detected, would have small chance of finding and destroying their target because of the enormous speeds. And if large numbers of attacking rockets were sent at the same time the defences would be jammed.

So if the rocket is to be controlled it is necessary to prevent it being illegally made. In the case of rockets with nuclear warheads it is, of course, possible to control the production of fissile material. Enormous factories are required and these could not escape detection.

But by now many tons of fissile material have been produced. So we cannot now hope to control the rocket weapon in this way, though

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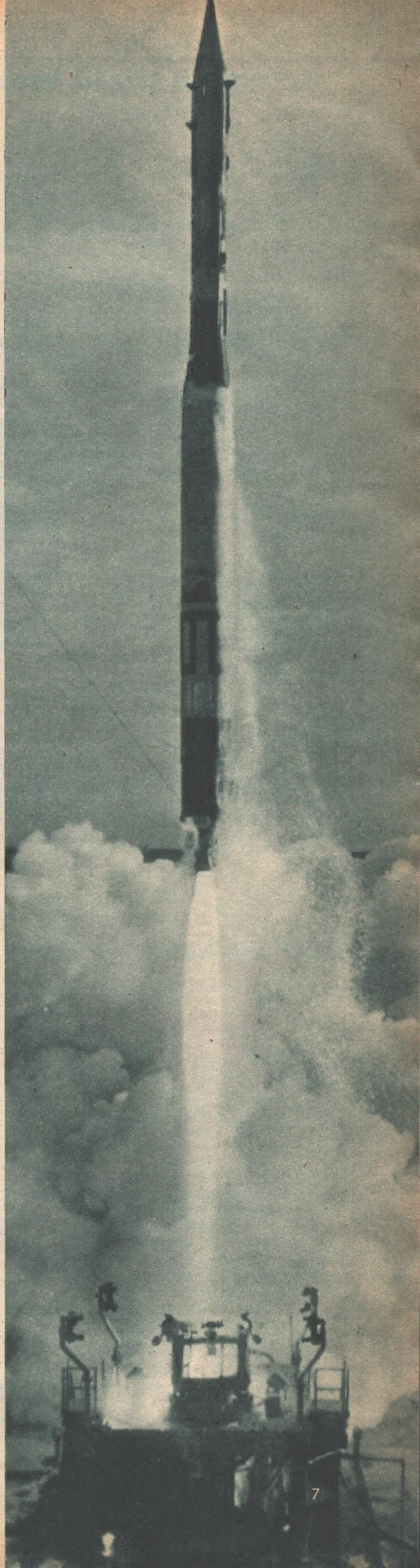

A U.S. Navy Vanguard rocket roars away. Inside—a complex guidance system. The difficulties in manufacturing such delicate parts may make it possible for a missile ban to be enforced

He was a timid man in the grip of a sudden crazy courage. But

As Charles rode towards the flying leader of the herd, their eyes met in

WILD RIDE

by WILLIAMS FORREST

ILLUSTRATED BY F. BELLAN

COARSE shouts sounded from the rocks and brush, and occasionally Charles, the ranch cook, glancing up, could see wild horses climbing the rocky trails, bounding and frightened. The cowboys were trying to corral the thousand to fifteen hundred horses that were spread here among the stones, brush and pines. In a week the roundup of cattle would begin, but this round-up of the wild horses was the first order of the day on the long, deep ranch.

The moment came for which Charles was waiting—the flood of horses on the plain as they were driven toward the blind trap that stood concealed in twisted juniper to the west. He sensed rather than saw the men concealed at the entrance of the blind-trap corral, waiting to close the tall gate on the last of the mustangs raging downward toward it. Then his eyes went back to the horses. In the lead was a white mare, a hint of the devil in the dashing of the untamed hoofs.

The plain broke into dust and sound. Then it happened as it had before. The leader of the swaying rush of horses shied, and the band began to disperse in all directions on the plain. Charles could not hear it, but he felt the cursing of the cowboys. He felt the drain of their frustration as their work melted away in the broken heat of the dying sun.

But he experienced more than that, as he turned back to his kitchen, to his skillets and dutch oven. He had the crazy conviction that he, Charles Madison, fat, lame, ignored and terribly lonely, could lead over a thousand

was that enough to master the fury of a maddened herd?

challenge. Then, brutally, he forced her aside with his own fierce mount

mustangs into the long green trap that was waiting for them. . . .

In a few moments the cowboys would be back in the camp, anxious for their grub. Charles felt shy when they came, because of the masterful dream that had come to him. He knew he had no right to imagine doing something that was superior to anything these men had attempted. But the men noticed nothing unusual in his manner; he was more or less invisible to them. He was a name, Cookie, or Old Cookie, even though he was only thirty; and he was a pair of hands that provided the food that was so important to them.

Of course they heeded him in his own realm of authority, because, after all, he was the cook, the most important man on the range with the possible exception of the one who paid you. But they did not accept him into their realm. He sat on the outskirts of it, in the dusky evening after they had eaten his steak, *frijoles* and biscuits. He sat and listened to their stories, or to the songs that one man, a bronc-buster, sang while he ran fingers over a battered golden guitar.

Tonight after the meal, the troubadour sang of the cowboys' rage and misery that day. He began from the beginning, when they left the ranch and started out to round up these horses. Charles sat on the rim of the firelight, his legs tucked under him like a tailor's. And, as he listened, he felt something in him rise to the music and adventure. After all, that was why he was here. Often, back home, they had called him "Charlie, the family's folly"—although he was not supposed to know that. He had come out here to be a hero, wondering all the time if it were possible. A deep yearning had carried him to the ranges and ranches, but when the foremen saw him they discouraged him, until finally he lied and said he could cook.

Charles was the kind of man who could be pitied but never really liked. Therefore, he was embarrassing to everyone. Nothing about him shone or glistened; he was ill-favoured in gesture, voice and body; he seemed to be made of gruel and timidity; he was like a fat, longing dog. For a long time now he had been cooking for different outfits, and he had not poisoned a man yet with his brand of work. He had learned that fierce riders demand only that it be enough.

Now the musician was strumming and singing, and the men had their bedding rolls down and were stretched on them. And the night man, who took care of the work horses until dawn, sometimes answered back, with a long clear call to the music from the dark of the plain.

The song told of the rugged labour and final failure of the day, and when it was over the cowboys were ready to go to sleep. But the foreman, Ted McGovern, would not let them. He demanded more coffee from Cookie, and sat cross-legged by the fire.

Ted said, "Tomorrow we get those horses. Now I'm not warning anybody, just the horses. But I don't mean to be made a fool of, on this range or any other."

The men nodded, but none knew what to say. A few years back, if they had had a horse problem like this, they would have shot them down with rifles. After all, there was no sense in letting wild horses run around and interfere with the cattle and maybe ruin the roundup; and horses could do it running in with the cattle or ahead or behind them. But now horses were worth money; the settlers north and the army paid good prices for them, and only a fool would shoot them down and let them lie there for the wolves.

Ted said, "I'm sayin' to every man, we get those horses tomorrow. There's no time left. We got to start roundup, and we can't mess with this chore. I'm sayin' that to every man."

It sounded impressive to Charles, but that was because he liked to hear impressive things that he would like to utter himself. But he could tell that the cowboys didn't like the orders that Ted was giving them.

Then, standing with the huge mottled coffee pot, Charles ventured to say something. He said, "Ted, if a man could ride point on that big herd. . . ?"

There was a silence so large that the crackling of the small flames left in the fire sounded like explosions. Then the minstrel ran one laughing chord on his guitar, and the men's faces pulled in derision and exasperation.

Ted sucked his cigarette and said, "Now Cookie tells us how to do it. Cookie, ride point on the herd? Ride in front of *that* herd? Kill yourself? Now, Cookie, why don't *you* do it?"

They all laughed.

"I only meant," said Charles, "that they have to be pointed in, and they follow—and

a man might do it." And they all laughed and things were simpler and easier again. Everyone was relieved of a burden but Charles. Ted called, "Let's hit those rolls!"

Dawn came. Charles awoke first, as was his duty. Around him the cowboys slept. From afar he heard the stamp of the horses, and then the canter of a cowboy. The nightman was coming for his breakfast. Then, as coffee and steak and bread were steaming, Charles woke the wranglers, who would go out and loop the horses for the cowboys. And then, finally, the cowboys got up, washed in a bucket and strode to their food.

The wranglers finished their coffee and went out to rope horses for the men, taking orders as they went, seeming not to listen, but knowing all the time what horse was required, as a cowboy called out, through his steak or coffee, "Estanso," or, "Bitty," or "Pint." The wranglers would rope these out of the herd and produce them for the saddles of the cowboys.

Then Charles cleaned up. And then there was nothing to do but wait dreaming, looking toward the rocks and mesas; looking and dreaming, and feeling as though the gibes of the men last night had set in him like thorns.

ONE of the wranglers, the one who was caring for the afternoon herd, had lingered and now begged an extra cup of coffee. Charles gave it to him. The wrangler, named Joe, squatted and drank and smoked and watched Charles through slanted sun-bleached eyes.

"Hey, Cookie," he said, "that's a fine idea, riding point on them horses. Now, I agree with you, and I'm against those men that laughed about it."

Charles knew he was being mocked. He didn't let on. But he would have liked to have dumped a heap of hot coals on the cowboy's black sweat-scorched hat.

"Cookie," said Joe, "you wasn't thinkin' you could go out and do thet, were you?"

Charles looked up so fast that his neck cracked. And then he knew, for the first time, that his deepest secrets were visible and pathetic.

At noon the cowboys were spirited, hopeful and hungry. They came to dinner in relays, groups of them running the mustangs while others ate and changed mounts.

Now they were all kind to Charles, letting some of their famished cheer spill over on him. "Cookie," one said, "a man has rid point on broncs, that's the truth. But not on no herd like this." And another said: "Cookie, you ain't got no malice for last night, have you?"

They were generous. And Charles was grateful, so he pampered them.

Then they rode off with a shot, the fresh horses springing for the hills, and Charles watched them, feeling the sag of his belly as if it were the sag of his very soul. He watched them out of sight. He would never ride with them. If he ever rode, like a man, he would have to do it for himself. . . .

Then he saw the wrangler, Joe, nearby, resting for work to come. Charles waved idly, and his arm crooked, with sudden, brutal, irresistible decision.

He invited the wrangler to leftovers and coffee, an honour in the afternoon and one that would never be refused. He had some pies laid out, ready for the oven, and the wrangler looked at them with anticipatory longing. Charles said, "Sit down, sit down." And the wrangler curled around his blue-clad knees.

Charles gave him hot coffee, and a plate of curled dark steak and three hard biscuits. Then he walked away, as if to relieve himself, but behind the few cottonwoods he picked up his whale-line, blanket and saddle. He came to the cropping remount horses, and laid down his blanket and saddle. He uncurled his line, made his loop, and started it turning a little, clumsily. His thick fingers were shaking, and the motion went into the twirl of the rope.

He looked for the horse he wanted, and found him easily. It was a bronze horse, muscular and spirited. Charles approached him. . . .

Timidly at first, Charles rode, west, toward the rim rocks. The horse picked its way idly. It did not combat him.

The late wind came blowing down the plain, picking grains of sand. Flicks broke on Charles's face and made the horse turn his head. They walked and trotted to the rim rocks and hid among them.

Charles felt the motions of the strong horse beneath him, and he knew that death lived in those powerful loins and withers; death for him, Charles Madison. This truly was a horse, one that could carry him out on the plain in front of the rushing wild ones. And this was a horse that could throw him into the bone hoofs pounding over the short grass and the sand.

There was a vibration in the earth. Charles knew that the long hard day's work of the cowboys was coming to a climax. Once again the herd was being hazed toward the corral.

The vibration was an unsteady tremor under him, and his mount lifted his head, and raced his eyes around. Charles's stomach felt empty, as if nothing had been inside it since its beginning, nothing but the sinking emptiness of fear.

The earth vibrated again. Not a muscle in Charles's body seemed to have strength. They felt as if they were pulp. And his spirit cowered.

Then the rocks erupted. The wild horses swept on to the plain, led by a pure white female demon with flying small hoofs and a frantic courage that could turn the herd and scatter it once again to the hills. Glistening, the herd swept along, and there seemed to be a red haze around it as it went.

Now his fierce horse had reacted and Charles was riding. But he did not break the stride with the bitter bit. And the curve of the mustangs was forging toward him.

Charles's heart seemed to burst. He met the leader. It seemed to Charles that their eyes met in a challenge. And he forced her aside with his brusque bronze mount and was in the lead, in the pell-mell toward the wings of the hidden corral.

In a stream, on the plain, a thousand wild horses were running. And Charles was riding at the point. He had heard that the wilder the horses, the more tractable they could be, under the influence of their leader, and it seemed to be true.

I can take them anywhere, he thought, *anywhere.*

He proved it, in the headiness of his power. He swung to the left, and the long band fled after him in a sweep, pulling its dust-cloud after it. And he swung in a long arc to the right, and the whipping colours of the horses followed. When he started a half-circle the horses followed.

Then he became humble in his power and went directly forward, toward the corral.

And now he had to make a choice. If he broke away at the wings of the corral, he would scatter the herd, just as the white mare had. But if he led them inside, he knew it might be all over for him. A thousand wild horses would thunder in behind him, and he might not be capable of getting over the fence at the end before the milling stampede settled and rested in the dust of its own turmoil.

There was the corral ahead. He would not have known it for what it was unless he had seen it built. It seemed merely a wide, then diminishing, green vista, an excellent place for hazed horses to run forward. The white mare pulled abreast of him, shied a little, and part of the herd moved with her. But Charles nudged her in again, and she ran beside him with sweat dark on her and her eyes rolling.

He had to decide, and he did. And it was simpler than he had thought.

Headlong he led them, right to the far end. Then he crashed against the wire and wood of the fence and felt himself going down. He knew then that courage could kill you, but he laughed, regretting nothing.

But Ted McGovern and a few others had ridden along the south wing of the trap, seeing Cookie ride inside. And with a healthy oath, Ted vaulted over the fence from the saddle, when he saw Charles toppling. Shouting, lashing with his quirt, Ted protected Cookie's head, straddling him and battling the confused mass of horses. The horses milled, paced, stamped, and withdrew from the rear fence and at last the stinging dust began to settle around their unshod hoofs.

"Cookie? Cookie?" said Ted. There was no answer. But others were there now, and Cookie was lifted high over the fence and taken to his own fire.

THERE was a gathering around him that he would have loved if he could have seen it. Joe said: "He daid?" Another man looked, felt, and said, "No, he ain't."

Two cowboys whooped. Ted said, "A little goddam respect!"

They showed respect. Nobody attempted to take Cookies' place at the fire; nobody sneaked a piece of bread. They stretched Charles out on a deep layer of blankets, and kept him perhaps too warm, with other blankets on top. They washed away the blood on his face and arms.

Charles stirred. He looked round at the smiling men, and his hurt and wounds were nothing in the wonder of this acceptance. He sat upright, and laughed when Joe said, affectionately, "Okay, cowboy. We've waited long enough. Where's the grub?"

Staggering, to the laughter of the tough cowboys, none of whom had escaped broken heads and arms at one time or another, Charles put together the big meal.

And then it was the quiet time, dim under the stars. THE END

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Day out

Smooth shell, salty smell,
Seaweed bubble popping;
Gull screech, pebble beach—
Knobbly, cobbly hopping.

Green slime, slippery climb—
Breakwater straddling;
Toe tickling sand, trickling—
Wave slappy paddling.

Crab catches, sandy patches,
Bucketing and spading;
High tide—boat ride . . .
Fizzy lemonading.

Eve time—leave time . . .
Going home untidy;
Take things that make things
Sandy, damp, sea-sidy.

HELEN MORGAN

Will this new blood save the Lords?

The old guard's in trouble. Even women are being recruited to the noble cause

by LORD KINROSS

Dowager Lady Reading

Barbara Wootton

Lady Ravensdale

Dame Katharine Elliot

Four women—the first ever to sit in the House of Lords—were among the life peers named in July

FROM one end of the Houses of Parliament to the other there runs, parallel with the Thames, a long high corridor. Half-way down it is a swing door, marking an abrupt transition from one atmosphere to another. Well-trodden green matting gives place to soft red pile. Unvarnished woodwork and worn upholstery is exchanged for the opulence of polished oak and brass and leather.

"Down there" beyond the door, all is hubbub and bustle. "Up here" reigns a breathless hush, in which the visitor instinctively speaks more softly and walks more slowly. He has passed, it seems, from a public place, into the rarefied atmosphere of some private mansion—passed, in fact, from the House of Commons into the House of Lords.

Now people, such as never thought to do so before, are to pass into the Lords as members. For the past fifty years it has been changing its character to keep up with the times.

In 1911 it gave up its power to reject Bills but retained the power to delay them (with the exception of Money Bills) by sending them back to the Commons three times over, with instructions to "think again." In 1949 it lost the power to send them back more than once.

Hitherto the House has been composed of hereditary peers, together with a selection of law lords and bishops. Now, thanks to the passing of the Life Peerages Bill, it is to be composed also of life peers and—admitting women for the first time—of life peeresses, none of whose titles will be inflicted on their offspring.

The four women selected are all well known in public life—one as an active Conservative chairman, another as a worker in social causes, the third as a university professor and the fourth as a hereditary peeress who, on account of her sex, has hitherto been debarred from sitting in the Lords.

The new life peers consist of two Conservative M.P.s, four Labour M.P.s or ex-M.P.s, one trade union official, one university professor, one ex-colonial governor and a representative of the Church of Scotland.

Will this innovation solve the problem of the House of Lords? The answer may be found down that long hushed corridor.

It leads eventually into a sumptuous hall, profusely decorated in the medieval manner. Before us broods a forbidding life-size statue of Queen Victoria, in marble, seated upon a marble throne.

This is the Princes' Chamber, the anteroom from which two doors lead, one to the left, and the other to the right, into the Chamber itself.

Each is guarded, as it were, by a family butler, resplendent in full evening dress. Passing his well-mannered scrutiny I stroll inside and, trying to look as though I felt quite at home, sit down on one of the long lines of erect, well-upholstered, red leather couches stretching before me.

These Jeeves-like janitors, as lordly as lords, are men who, like Royalty, have trained themselves never to forget a face. Only once have I seen one of them nearly stumped. One afternoon during the war I walked into the Chamber with Lord Amherst, both of us in air force uniform.

The janitor scrutinized my friend, seemed to recognize him, but looked a little worried, and went across to confer, in a discreet whisper, with the janitor opposite. When I went out he asked me the name of my companion.

"Lord Amherst," I answered. He looked relieved, and explained that he had been misled by a belief that His Lordship was a major in the army. A fortnight before he would have been right. He was not to know that my friend had just transferred to the air force.

The first time I entered this exclusive assembly I crept modestly to a bench on which not many peers were sitting. Presently I overheard a peer, sitting on the front bench just below me, say in a low voice to his neighbour, "Don't look round now, but who is the peer just behind us?"

After a tactful pause the other looked casually

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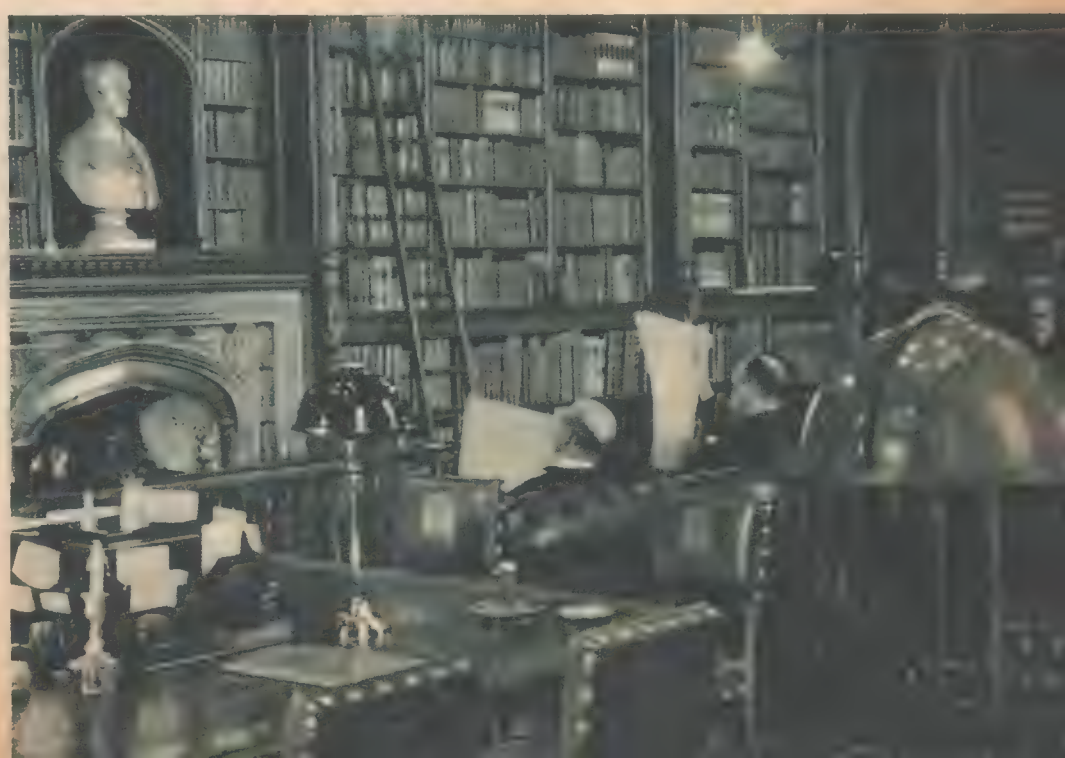

The library of the Lords has a stock of almost 100,000 books. Designed by Sir Charles Barry, it opened in 1850

It's a soft holiday number—bed, breakfast and no reveille. At the Union Jack Club a private can hang up a notice . . .

DO NOT DISTURB

by NORMAN PHILLIPS

Service families often spend holidays at their own club which stands a block away from the original building. Each guest pays 8s. a night, with reduced charges for children

CLARRY RACKHAM was not frightened when the lonely soldier produced a pistol. She knew that she had to talk to him in the calm, motherly way known to hundreds of thousands of Servicemen whom she has fed at the Union Jack Club in London's Waterloo Road.

The man with the pistol poured out his troubles in the tiled dining-room where Mrs. Rackham is head waitress. He had come home from overseas to find that his wife had left him. Now, he declared, he was going to kill his wife and then shoot himself.

Mrs. Rackham listened sympathetically; then, while he was eating his sweet, she slipped out and warned the resident superintendent. They persuaded the soldier to stay on at the club instead of setting out to seek revenge. He remained another two days. Three years later he returned to tell the head waitress that he had married again.

Nothing surprises Mrs. Rackham after twenty-six years with the institution known to sailors as the "Jack Club" and to the other services as the "U.J.C." King Edward VII opened the original building on July 1, 1907; since then the doors have never been closed and its beds have been occupied nine million times.

Membership is limited to Servicemen and women below commissioned rank and in the record year, 1956, the clubs—there are three, one each for men, women and families—provided 324,163 beds and 630,959 meals.

Clarry Rackham presides over the men's dining-room in deliberately unmilitary style with fresh linen and flowers on each table; placing bemedalled sergeant-majors on an equal footing with young recruits and insisting that her waitresses address every ordinary seaman, private or airman as "sir."

One of the first customers she remembers serving was a serious-looking airman who invariably brought a heavy book with him and read throughout the meal.

"Why don't you try a good romance," Mrs. Rackham asked him. The airman smiled and asked her to suggest the name of a suitable romantic novel. Later, she learned that her studious customer was Lawrence of Arabia, then enlisted in the Royal Air Force under the name of Shaw.

Some Americans show appreciation by patronizing this thoroughly British club in preference to the more palatial premises provided for them by the United States authorities. A Boston, Massachusetts, Serviceman, William Dove, who died three years ago, left the club 150 dollars in his will.

Who he was or why he left the bequest is a mystery to Mrs. Rackham and to the clubs' comptroller, Major Richard Walker.

An exuberant Canadian once picked up the slender head waitress and, while she protested ineffectually, whirled her around the dining-room. It was the only occasion when Mrs. Rackham felt that the situation was out of hand.

Next morning when she went down to open the dining-room for breakfast at seven, the same Canadian was waiting bashfully with a bunch of flowers and a box of chocolates to ask Mrs. Rackham's forgiveness for his boisterous behaviour.

Mrs. Rackham has also learned that many Servicemen can down two or three full breakfasts, and that some members spend their entire leave at the club without setting foot outside the doors.

Members can book a room for a weekend, hang a "Do Not Disturb" sign on the door and sleep from Friday to late Sunday. The record, however, was set before the last war by a soldier who came home on leave from India. He stayed for six months and, according to Mrs. Rackham, never once left the building during the entire period.

"There's everything here under the one roof," she says, "to care for a member's needs while he's in London."

The club bedrooms are simply but comfortably furnished. There is a barber's shop and a laundry, equipped with washing machines and irons. For recreation there are billiards, television and a library. Beer is served in the lounge and a snack bar stays open all night after the dining-room closes.

The Families and Women's Services clubs adjoin each other in Exton Street just off the Waterloo Road, one block north of the original club. They provide similar amenities with the addition of a staffed nursery for young children

In her room at the club, S.A.C.W. Barbara Lloyd from St. Austell, Cornwall, cleans her buttons

Warrant officer Henry Harris brought his wife and children to stay at the club when he was posted home after being stationed in Singapore

and a do-it-yourself hairdressing salon in addition to a staff hairdresser.

Some members of the Families Club have been returning annually to Christmas dinners for as long as thirty years. Others, attracted by the economical rates spend their annual holidays there.

Special attention is given to mothers and children who come to London to join aircraft that will re-unite them with husbands stationed abroad. These flights usually leave very early in the morning.

The night porter was helping a mother and three children into a taxi at three one morning and, after loading all their miscellaneous luggage, he asked the mother if she was sure that she had left nothing behind. The flustered woman counted her packages and then her children before letting out a scream, "My baby!"

The child was found sleeping serenely in its cot.

Advance booking is often necessary to obtain a bed, but when all the rooms are occupied Servicemen are welcome to sleep in the lounge chairs. No distinction is made between nationalities and on the eve of the Suez Crisis guests included a contingent of Egyptian troops.

It was a woman, Ethel McCaul, who conceived the idea of a club for sailors and soldiers below commissioned rank. She was a nurse during the Boer War who learned at first hand of the lack of facilities for troops visiting or passing through London.

Miss McCaul suggested the establishment of a club in 1902 when 200,000 sailors and soldiers were arriving each year at Waterloo Station. The only accommodation in the vicinity was of low standard and many Servicemen were victimized.

The founders performed a double service by choosing a site in Waterloo Road occupied by eight public houses that had to be torn down to make way for the club. King Edward VII subscribed one hundred guineas to endow a room in the club and performed the opening ceremony.

The Prince of Wales (the future George V) declared the club would be "a potent force for good in keeping men from the many temptations which beset sailors and soldiers in uniform on arrival in the metropolis."

Within a few weeks the club's 208 bedrooms were filled every night and more rooms had to be added. Subsequent additions made it possible to provide 1,100 beds a night during the second World War and the present capacity is 962 a night.

The Families Club was opened in 1913 and the Women's Services Club in 1952. A council, headed by Admiral Sir William James, is in charge of the three clubs and there is also a committee from the various service commands.

Council and committee meet quarterly to discuss the operation of the clubs and to deal with suggestions advanced by members. The committee vetoed the introduction of juke-boxes but it supported the proposal of naval members for the introduction of foam rubber mattresses and persuaded the council to spend £9,500 on equipping all the beds with them.

The committee endorsed the employment of waitresses in Mrs. Rackham's dining-room in preference to the cafeteria system.

Clarry Rackham joined the staff in 1932 when she was thirty-two years old. For twenty-six years, with the exception of her annual holidays, she has travelled up every day from her home in Billericay, Essex, to take up her post in the club dining-room.

More than a million Servicemen found lodgings in the club during the second World War. During Dunkirk exhausted men back from the beaches got their first meal at the club. Clarry Rackham and the staff worked day and night to feed them, often holding up the men's tired heads to keep them from falling asleep on the tables.

In July of last year the Queen visited the club to unveil a plaque commemorating its fiftieth anniversary.

One day during the war, when the dining-room was filled with uniformed men, a middle-aged man in civilian clothes entered with a young sailor. Mrs. Rackham eyed them with suspicion and, as they ordered a meal, she went to the superintendent's office.

"There's a civilian in there talking to a sailor," she reported. "I think maybe he's a spy."

The superintendent walked through the dining-room with assumed casualness and asked the lone civilian to identify himself.

"Your 'spy,'" he later advised Mrs. Rackham, "happens to be the First Sea Lord and the sailor is one of his relatives."

Clarry Rackham gave the distinguished visitor no special attention. She could see that the young sailor was enjoying his dinner and that was why the club was there. THE END

As the club's head waitress, Mrs. Rackham is well-known to thousands of Servicemen

The liveliest trickster on the beach

by JOHN CROMPTON

With the skill of Houdini, the crab can change his shape, vanish, or break the prison of his own tough shell

LOOKING into a pool of sea water left among beach rocks by the tide, you can sometimes see a patch of seaweed detach itself from its surroundings and move elsewhere. This, in all probability, will be a spider crab, one of the commonest of the crabs found in the waters around the coasts of Britain.

So perfectly is it camouflaged by the weeds on its back that only movement betrays its presence. Still more remarkable, the camouflage does not merely grow on the crab but, if necessary, is selected and put on deliberately.

Spider crabs have been caught, stripped of their weeds and put into an aquarium where similar weeds were growing. Here they were observed to pluck weeds and deliberately place them on their backs, to be held in place by hairs until they "took root."

What followed was even more surprising. Seaweed acts as camouflage only if other seaweed is growing around. So a spider crab, covered with weeds, was put into an aquarium which contained no seaweed but only small sponges and the like. Here the weeds on its back served to advertise the crab rather than to conceal it. The crab removed all the weeds which it carried and planted sponges, so that it harmonized with the surrounding growths.

Crabs are the commonest creatures on the sea shore. Very tiny ones are always classed by their captors as "babies." But they are not babies. Baby crabs are found far out to sea.

When the egg of a sea crab hatches, a minute speck appears, bearing no resemblance to a crab. It is transparent with large eyes, not set on stalks like those of its parents, and it carries two long spears, one jutting out from the middle of its back and the other from its head.

Though its parents—with a few exceptions—can only walk, this youngster swims actively. In an hour or so it moults, shedding its outside covering and emerging in a different form. It does this several times. None of these shapes gives any indication that it is a crab.

At last it loses the ability to swim, and sinks to the sea bed. Here again it moults, but this time the emerging form is that of a crab, almost microscopic but a replica of its parents, including the stalked eyes and the pincers. By a long series of further moults it grows bigger, but it will take many moults before it can be caught by a child and classed as a baby.

Fresh-water crabs are exceptions to this process of development. Their young are shaped like the parents from the first.

The armour of the crab has one drawback—it

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Spider crabs, like the one in the fisherman's left hand, are adept in the art of disguise. Sometimes seaweed grows on their shells, if not, they can plant it

Ellis's team discover how a crash helmet will react under impact by testing it with heavy weights

SOMEBODY shone a torch on the back wheel of the bicycle. It was squashed into the shape of a banana. The cyclist, struck from behind by a car while pushing his machine home on a wet autumn night, was told later that he would receive no compensation for his injuries because, it was claimed, the smashed reflector on his bicycle had never been any good.

Acting on behalf of the injured man, Edward Ellis, a scientist who specializes in efficiency tests on industrial and commercial products, obtained a reflector of the same type from its makers. For twelve hours he left it in a tank at his research laboratories under a continuous spray of water, after which he placed it in a chamber where jets blew dust at it for five hours. Then it was jolted violently up and down on a metal plate for sixty minutes to reproduce the equivalent of years of shaking on bad roads. Ellis then proved by photometric tests that the amount of light reflected was still well above the expected road-safety standards.

Not satisfied completely until he could check his findings with a practical test, he waited for a rainy night, told one of his assistants to hold the reflector on a road outside the laboratories, then drove towards it in his car. "I had ample time in which to pull up after spotting the reflector in my lamps," he says. Ellis turned the evidence over to his client. Before long the injured man had received his compensation.

At fifty-eight, Ellis is a large man with piercing, dark-brown eyes and the cautious, thoughtful approach of the typical "boffin." He once had the job of interrogating captured Nazi scientists. Ten years ago he opened his laboratories in the Surrey village of Albury, midway between Guildford and Dorking. Since then he has tested almost every type of product and material on the market.

In one recent week he tested four different aircraft parts, several types of paving stone, a liquid fuel, a new electric kettle, steel girders, driving mirrors, a sample of fertilizer, and the complete front wall of a house which was built for the purpose in his testing yard.

In the same week he received a request from South America to test a brand of cosmetic, and another from a British bank to determine scientifically whether a figure in a written wages agreement had been altered by forgery. He

They're tearing your home to bits

by ALAN LLOYD

You don't have to trust to luck if you're out shopping. Be guided by the trail of wrecks

Everything used in the home from an electric kettle to the kitchen sink has been tested at the Ellis laboratories

A town saved thousands of pounds when Ellis's tests showed that its plastic sinks would not stand up to normal wear

concluded on Saturday morning by acting as "guinea pig" in an experiment to find how the wearer of a new crash helmet would react to a sharp impact on the head. Wearing the helmet, and with a thick eiderdown wrapped round his shoulders, he had a lead weight dropped on him from a height of several feet.

"I spent the weekend with a severe headache and a stiff neck," he says.

When a town corporation demanded proving tests before it ordered several thousand plastic sink and draining-board units for its housing estates, Ellis subjected one of the units to continuous relays of hot and cold water, mixed in every type of household detergent he could think of, threw saucepans into the sink, and even dropped in a kettle of boiling water on the assumption that a housewife might do the same if she scalded her fingers. After several weeks of testing he reported that the product was not sufficiently developed. The sink had cracked and splintered at the waste hole.

Council officials called on Ellis when they suspected that a decorator had swindled them over a contract involving the paintwork on another estate. The estimate had allowed for an undercoat and three topcoats. They wanted to know if, in fact, four coats of paint had been applied.

Ellis took samples from several window frames back to his laboratories. With a microtome—a machine like a miniature, high-precision bacon-slicer—he carved off cross sections thousandths of a millimetre thick.

UNDER a microscope the different layers of paint were visible. There were only two coats. Faced with the laboratory report the contractor chose to strip off the old paint and do the job again at a cost to himself of about £10,000 rather than be taken to court.

Sometimes simple methods produce results where scientific tests have failed to give a complete answer. Once a furniture retailer threatened to sue a company which manufactured chip-board furniture because the edge of a table had broken away. Ellis was asked to test the material and the assembled product. In his laboratories a sample of chip-board and an identical table withstood all reasonable strains.

He decided that the damage could have been caused only by unduly rough handling, probably during unloading from a lorry. On a sudden urge he called in witnesses and had the replica table thrown off a lorry in the yard. It broke along a line that was almost identical to the original break. The retailers dropped their claim.

The testing of aircraft instruments and accessories is a continuous job at Ellis's laboratories, and faults have been found which, undetected, must have led to disaster in the air. One vital aircraft component was given eighty-four days in a humidity chamber, ten days in a climatic chamber undergoing rapid changes from extreme heat to extreme cold, twenty-eight days in a fungus chamber where spores were placed on the metal to test its fungus-resistant finish, then sprayed with salt mist to determine its resistance to corrosion. It reacted favourably.

It was vacuum tested for heights up to 60,000 feet, tested for fire resistance and acceleration reaction, placed on an apparatus which shook it vertically, horizontally, and in all possible flight positions. Still it reacted favourably.

Finally it was given a vibration endurance run on a machine which produces an exact replica of the frequencies and amplitudes experienced in flight. Suddenly, after hours of vibration, the metal fractured. The part was actually in use on experimental aircraft. "Luckily," says Ellis, "the combination of conditions we had simulated had not yet occured in the air." It was withdrawn immediately from use.

Large manufacturers have their own testing laboratories, but many turn work over to Ellis in the belief that their customers tend to place greater reliance on independent tests. Other work is done for small firms which have no testing facilities of their own. Ellis says that he takes a net personal profit of less than £2,000 a year out of his business.

Ellis has met many "crazy inventors." A big timber company specializing in wood-block flooring was fooled by a German inventor who claimed to have grown special bacteria cultures which, injected into waste wood, would harden it into a perfect flooring material. The firm went

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ILLUSTRATED BY
OLIVER BRABBINS

Ev

lokia had beauty, fire—and a trigger-happy father. What a death or glory wooing for a shy young suitor like Stamati!

The arranged marriage

by KATE MANGO

"IF I cannot have Evdokia, I shall die," Stamati breathed fervently. "You must listen to me. You must. There is no other girl like her in the village—none so beautiful, so good, so pure." Eyes glowing, he clasped his hands over his shepherd's crook. His whole face was transfigured with love. "I beg of you, find some way to turn her heart towards me. Otherwise I shall die."

The only sound which answered Stamati was the baa-ing of the sheep as they cropped the poor grass at his feet. The valley below him was silent. The distant cold mountain peaks, blue and pink in the sunlight, gave no reply. In all the immense dome of sky, there could be seen only a distant eagle, silently wheeling.

Stamati did not quite know to whom he spoke: to God, perhaps. It was some relief to his full heart just to be able to speak. Though in Evdokia's presence, or that of her family, he could barely raise his eyes. He was cursed with shyness. Yet, with true Greek self-respect, he knew himself not quite unworthy, even of Evdokia. What girl could ask more than a man's true love, and his strong arms to win their living?

In her village home, Evdokia was drawing water, scrubbing floors, washing clothes, wrapped from her sisters in an obstinate silence. Kati and Elli watched her, ready to find fault.

"This fine lady thinks herself too good to work with her hands as we do," they sneered. "She thinks she will soon be on her way to a fine lazy life in America, with machines for servants."

When she heard such remarks, Evdokia bit her lip. She would not give them the satisfaction of letting them see her tears. She wept only when alone at night in her room, turning over and over the two or three letters Christos had sent her in the first years of his absence. So long ago now.

Evdokia was only sixteen when Christos left the village to make his fortune in the new world. He had promised to write regularly. He had promised to send for her as soon as he could, so that they could be married.

He had promised so much. She had waited so long. And still the promises seemed as far from fulfilment as they had been on the day of his going.

Evdokia was small, plump, rounded of face and figure, with a pair of dark eyes which should have been merry. Sometimes, still, she could laugh, often making Stamati the butt of her jokes; but only too often her eyes were cast down and her mouth compressed—especially now that her parents and sisters had begun to put pressure on her to get married.

What hurt her most of all was that they hardly cared whom she married. They just wanted her off their hands. Why, they would even be glad if she took that stupid Stamati, without a word to say for himself, without an ounce of spirit or courage!

Evdokia could see her sisters' point of view, of course. She was twenty-four now; almost old enough, having no arrangement to marry, to be marked down an old maid. Kati was twenty, and Elli nineteen; both at an age for marriage, and both of them ardently courted. Their wooers were fine, strapping young men; one the son of a well-to-do farmer, the other with his own shop in the village. Nothing stood between Kati and Elli and marriage but—Evdokia. It was impossible that younger sisters should marry before the eldest. Until Evdokia was off the shelf, Kati and Elli had to stay on it. That was the custom of their people, and one it would not have occurred to them to defy.

If Evdokia persisted in waiting for Christos, who might never return or send for her, what was the outlook for Kati and Elli? In their view, it was grim.

"You know that Christos might well be dead," said Kati loudly to Elli, making sure Evdokia must hear her. "What's to become of the three of us then? We might as well all become nuns."

Sometimes Evdokia in desperation even thought of that, which would equally get her out of her sisters' way; but there was always hope that one day the long-awaited summons from Christos might come.

Now, with Kati's cruel words in her ears, she ran out of the house to stand on the sun-baked earth pathway overlooking the village. She stood there for some minutes, fighting for control, trying to blink back her tears. Then she looked out across the countryside with the blank gaze of one who seeks vainly a face lost for ever.

"Christos! Does the same sun still shine upon you?"

There was—she knew there could be—no answer. . . .

HIGH up on the opposite hillside were the scattered white dots of a flock of sheep, and the small black line which must be their shepherd. She did not know that it was Stamati, looking yearningly towards her house, addressing her and her parents in fiery words such as none but the sheep had ever heard from his lips.

Evdokia took a last look at the beauty of the morning and turned away, back to the little martyrdom of life in that now unhappy home. Unhappy it was. The girls' mother had reached a point at which she tried to shout down their squabbling. Mitso, their father, had begun to go off to the *taverna* every night—to get some peace, so he said.

That night, Evdokia spent even longer than usual on her knees beneath the ikon of her patron saint. There were still tears wet on

"Son of a dog!" bellowed Mitso, waving his revolver. "Vile seducer!" Stamati felt a moment's regret for the long years of life which might have been his

her cheeks as she lay down on her narrow bed in vain search for sleep.

The night was so warm that the younger girls had taken their bedding up on the roof. But even there, neither could sleep.

"Things can't go on like this," hissed Kati to Elli.

"Keep your voice low," whispered Elli. "*She'll* hear."

"And what if she does? She knows how we feel. If it makes her uncomfortable, well, she deserves to be—standing between us and marriage."

As it chanced, Evdokia did not hear them, nor did she know they were on the roof. After tossing and turning about for some time, at last she sat up, half-decided to take her straw mattress up on the roof, too, where it might be cooler. At that moment she heard a movement in the garden below. She sat, frozen, listening.

A few moments later, breaking upon the night-stillness, there came the sound of a *bouzouki*, rather inexpertly played, beneath her window. Stamati's voice, unexpectedly strong and sweet, began to sing. The song was the yearning, dreamy love-song *Asta ta mallakia sou*, and it was finely sung. Stamati was putting his whole heart into it, gaining confidence as he went along.

Kati and Elli, peering down from the roof, clasped each other's hands and looked at each other with shining eyes in the pale light of the declining moon. Mitso roused himself from his slumbers and even put one foot out of bed, only to be restrained by his wife.

"It's under Evdokia's window," she hissed; and husband and wife looked at each other with hope.

Stamati was singing away in fine style, gazing soulfully upwards, when Evdokia sprang angrily from her bed. Flushed with rage, she picked up a little bowl of wild cyclamen gathered on the hillside and, with only a quick peep to ensure no mistake, flung it down upon the serenader's head.

After the crash of the bowl a horrid silence fell. Frozen with horror, Kati and Elli watched; their mother and Mitso waited.

Stamati dejectedly dropped the *bouzouki* and stood for a few moments with water dripping down his face and neck. Then he shook his head, plucked a stray cyclamen out of his hair, bent to pick up his instrument, and shambled off.

His feet were leaden. He had just done the bravest thing of his life, and all to no purpose. Unable ever to speak face to face, he had tried to sing of his love, knowing that in song his tongue lost its clumsiness. But, so far from having won Evdokia's heart, he had only exposed himself to one more humiliation.

He did not know that they had had an audience; if he had, he could hardly have felt more bitter. He almost decided to put Evdokia out of his heart for ever—but knew he could never do so.

KATI and Elli watched him retreat into the shadows, and then looked at each other. "It's no good," muttered Kati. "I've been hoping he might manage to win her. As a matter of fact, I put it into his head that he might try this way. But it didn't come off." She slumped down, disconsolate, on to her palliasse. "Can't you think of anything, anything?"

Elli, the quieter of the two, shook her head. She felt their position no less keenly than Kati; but she knew Evdokia's obstinacy. There was no hope for them but a letter from Christos; and there had not been one in six years.

"I've got an idea," said Kati suddenly. "Yes. . . . Wait a minute. It's coming. . . ."

Elli waited respectfully. Nothing disturbed the silence of the warm night but the occasional hoot of an owl.

"Yes," said Kati at last. "It's neat and it's daring and it ought to succeed. But to carry it off needs a man. Oh, heavens, if we only had somebody better to count on than Stamati. It's a pity all the other men of the village have given her up as a bad job."

Incautiously, she had raised her voice. Evdokia, still sleepless, caught the murmur of her sisters' conversation and clearly heard the last words. Then Elli must have warned Kati, for Evdokia heard no more.

Not that she wanted to. Those few overheard words rankled badly. She knew only too well where she stood with the young men of the village. She had seen them all fall off, discouraged, and marry other girls, until there was now nobody who wanted her but Stamati. . . .

On the roof above, her sisters' two dark, curly heads drew apart, and Kati waited for Elli's opinion of her plan.

"If Stamati just had a little more spirit . . ." Elli said wistfully. "As it is, what's the good?"

Kati wriggled impatiently. "We must try, that's all. Do you want to be an old maid?"

ELLI thought of the long years before her, and shook her head. She thought of the three years just past, during which all four women of the household had sewn faithfully at Evdokia's trousseau in every moment which could be spared from the work of the house and land; blankets, sheets, curtains, hangings and clothing, all spun, dyed and woven or stitched by their patient hands. And if Evdokia were to be married tomorrow, there was still Kati's trousseau, and her own, to be completed before their own weddings could take place.

Rallying her strength, she took Kati's hand. "You're quite right," she said. "We shall have to do something."

Next day, Kati went in search of Stamati. She found him milking his father's sheep on a distant hillside. He did not seem to be doing even that very efficiently. He was a gangly youth, she thought; over-tall, over-thin. Everything about him was indecisive, even his movements. She did not realize that he was harrowed with shyness, the more since the night's humiliation.

"Here," she said brusquely, "let me do that. I want to talk to you."

Stamati obediently got off the milking-stool and stood by while Kati went to work with quick and capable hands. Looking down at her bent head, he found himself wishing that it were Evdokia, not her sister, who had come to help him. This was what it would be like if they were married, Evdokia and he; she helping and serving him as a wife should, he gaining her bread and their children's. . . . Why must it all be only a dream? Why could there be no real hope?

Kati looked up suddenly from her work. "How much do you love Evdokia?" she asked.

"More than all the world," Stamati replied, shocked by her bluntness into coherent speech.

"You want to marry her?"

"I have no other wish."

Kati's eyes gleamed with satisfaction. "She gave you a wetting last night."

Stamati's eyes fell before hers. He felt half a man. It was dreadful that somebody else knew of it besides Evdokia.

"You wouldn't like the village to know . . ." Kati hinted cruelly.

"Oh, please, please, Kati——"

"Why should they know?" she interrupted him smoothly. "Not only can I keep my mouth shut when I want to, but I can tell you a way to gain Evdokia." She could not resist adding: "I don't know why you should want to, but since you tell me you do, that's your business."

"A way to gain Evdokia? You mean, to make her my wife?"

"Yes, to win her to wife. But you will need courage, Stamati, much courage. I only ask myself, can you do it?"

Stamati asked himself, too, and was unsure of the answer.

Suddenly, to his extreme embarrassment, Kati began to weep. "For my sake!" she cried. "For Elli's! For the sake of the men who love us. For Mother's sake, who has no peace in her house. For Father's, who's taken to drink. For everybody's sake, Stamati, if you take this thing on, you must not fail."

So far from giving him courage, her vehemence only frightened Stamati. There must be some terrible risk involved, to make her so earnest. At the same time he found it pleasant to have this pretty young girl almost literally at his feet and pleading with him. She was like Evdokia, if not quite so lovely. . . .

He banged one fist into the palm of the other hand and cried out: "I'll do it!" He spoiled the effect by letting drop his shepherd's crook, on which he had been leaning to watch her work; and by adding weakly, as he stooped to retrieve it: "That is, if you'll help me."

"Help you," cried Kati scornfully. "I'd do it for you if I could."

She began to explain the details of her plan. . . .

A few nights later, when there was no longer a moon, Kati slipped down the outside staircase and guided Stamati up on to the roof through the warm darkness. She could feel his trembling in the hand which clasped hers.

They went down into the house and reached Evdokia's door, where Elli was waiting. As soon as they reached her, Elli knocked on the door. Somewhere nearby a donkey brayed. All three started. Stamati let out a hollow groan. Two more donkeys brayed in answer, evidently not far off.

Elli called softly through the door. "Evdokia, Evdokia, I want you."

"At this time of night?"

Evdokia came to the door and opened it. Her outline was plain in the dim light of the votive candle before the ikon. Kati threw a shawl over her sister's head and guided Stamati's hands to lift her. Elli ran to make sure that their parents' door was securely fastened on the outside.

Evdokia screamed repeatedly as they hustled her down the stairs. She fought every inch of the way, but her sisters held on to her tightly when Stamati might have let go, if only out of pity for her fear. By a miracle, they fell down only the last few steps. All four landed in a heap together at the bottom, struggling and squirming.

Then Mitso and his wife, awakened

IN SHORT

Words Of Wisdom

At rather a critical stage in my professional life I was offered a brief with a very large fee marked upon it. For certain reasons I doubted the propriety of accepting it.

I went to see a famous Lord of Appeal, who listened to me and then said: "The golden rule of conduct that I have always followed is: if you feel a doubt about the propriety of doing a particular thing—DON'T DO IT."

And he added with a pleasant smile—"If everybody followed that rule, we lawyers would soon be out of business."

LORD BIRKETT

Starke's Holiday Guide Book

"Situated between green headlands, the sandy beach is caressed by a deep blue, foam-flecked ocean"

The Bonfire

A garden bonfire is no joke
Whether you're making it
Or taking it;
And wives go weak
(But wise ones don't speak)
When husbands desire
To make a fire,
Knowing the primeval urge
To kindle and stoke and poke
Is constraining
Beyond complaining,
Though in the event
The sum of matches spent
Defies all argument,
And dinner waits
Cold on plates.
Oh how the good wife prays
For a blaze,
Or, at least, for smoke!

MARJORIE EVANS

How To Make Money

If you want to make money on the Stock Exchange, old man, it's no good reading that City column. Those boys said the gramophone was dead in 1930.

What do you suggest?

You've got to study social trends. You must look ahead. For instance, what's going to follow luminous socks?

I shudder to think.

It's no use shuddering. Have you done anything about soft drinks?

No. Why?

Well, more and more people are turning to soft drinks.

Are they? All my friends are still knocking back the hard stuff.

If you don't mind my saying so, your friends are not necessarily a typical cross-section of the community.

You may be right. So I ought to put my money in soft drinks, is that it?

No, you should buy shares in breweries.

But you just said——

Surely you knew that breweries were pouring their money into soft drinks?

I didn't.

All the smart firms hedge these days, only they call it diversifying. You don't think cinema circuits make their money out of showing films, do you?

I shouldn't have thought they were making any money at all.

Some of them are doing astonishingly well. They're a good buy.

I'm catching on. In future if I think something's going out of fashion I shall make a point of investing in it. What else would you care to recommend?

Diamonds. People are buying them again, as you probably know.

Oh rather! The people on our High Street are covered with them.

Come, come now, this is a serious discussion, old man.

Sorry. What do you have to buy to make money out of diamonds? Gold?

No, diamonds. Now, have *you* noticed any trends?

Yes, cats won't eat anything nowadays unless it comes out of a tin.

If you *really* think that's a general trend, then obviously you should put everything into cat food. Personally, I wouldn't. What other trends have you noticed?

Well, all my neighbours are using mechanical mowers and cultivators and pumps. There's such a noise from their gardens at weekends I can't hear myself think.

You've got something there. Invest in garden machinery and you'll find you quite enjoy the noise.

What have *you* bought lately?

I've got quite a well-balanced portfolio at the moment. Nothing flashy, just a reflection of basic trends—headache powders, energisers, tranquillisers and a couple of crematorium companies. Can't see how I can go wrong.

Nor can I. Let's go and have a soft drink.

E. S. TURNER

Father Learns

"Wait till your father hears of this,"
  My mother used to frown,
And how I feared the fatal hour
  My father came from town.
Now I'm the father coming home
  To hear what deed's been done,
And I know pains and fears far worse
  Than when I was the son!

RICHARD ARMOUR

Just Published

As we became increasingly part of the life of Benin, we gradually ceased to find anything peculiar in many of the most incongruous situations. This may have been due to a slow process of "Africanization" of which, at the time, we were scarcely aware. . . . Nevertheless, some of the things which we saw and heard during the first year still seem rather amusing.

For example, whenever we drove to the European quarter in the evening, we had to pass a crossroads on the outskirts of the city. We usually passed this crossroads at roughly the same time. Whenever we did so, our headlights invariably revealed a man, stark naked and enjoying a bath on the little traffic-island underneath the signpost.

He obviously chose this spot for his ablutions because he found the signpost convenient for hanging his clothes. The fact that his privacy was periodically invaded by the headlamps of passing cars did not seem to worry him in the slightest.

From *Figures in Ebony*—past and present in a West African city, by Raymond Tong. Published last week by Cassell.

by the noise, began to add to it by beating upon their door and calling for help. It was lucky the cottage stood somewhat apart from the rest of the village; but plainly the commotion, carrying in the still night, would soon bring some interfering fool on the scene.

Kati and Elli picked up Evdokia, tightened the shawl again and bound her wrists. They planted her on the donkey's saddle and hoisted Stamati up behind her. Then, smacking its rump, they directed it towards the distant hills. The burdened animal clattered away as the villagers began to pour from their homes and Mitso broke down his door.

Suddenly the night seemed full of the echoing clatter of donkey's hoofs, going in different directions. Elli's lover, and Kati's, were carrying out their instructions to add to the confusion and divert the chase.

As they rode out of the village and up on to the hills, Stamati held tight to Evdokia, who seemed inclined to fling herself bodily from the donkey's back. Though he was in great fear both of the pursuit and of the thing he had done, Stamati was comforted by the warmth of his love's body, pressed against him. He could almost have deluded himself that they were wed indeed, and homing across the mountains after their marriage-feast—but for Evdokia's muffled cries and the sight of her swaddled head.

"Keep still, Evdokia," he said at last, and found his speech without impediment now that he was alone with his love. "You'll only fall off and hurt yourself, and then what shall I do?"

"Who are you?" gasped Evdokia. "You brute! I'll make you sorry for this. You wait till my fiancé hears of this. He will kill you."

To be called a brute, and by such loved lips, had a very strange effect upon Stamati. He had never thought of himself as even potentially a ruthless or dangerous person. With Evdokia in his arms, he found he could even do that.

"Be quiet," he said sternly. "You have no fiancé but myself. Christos is dead, or has long since forgotten you. You are my woman, and shall be my wife."

The voice in which he spoke was hard, raucous, unlike his own even in his own ears. He felt a little tremor go through Evdokia; then she was silent.

He did not guess her thoughts, that at last she accepted the fact of Christos's desertion of her; or know that a little thrill of pleasure had gone through her on hearing his blunt words. He only realized, uneasily, that she still did not guess who he was. What would her reaction be when her kidnapper proved to be no fearless *pallikari* of the hill-folk, but just Stamati, shy, undecided and weak. . . ?

Mitso was joined on the path outside his house by all the men-folk of the village. "What's happened? Who? Where? Why?" They all asked questions at once. In the light which streamed from the windows and doors of the house, Kati and Elli fell in and out of mock swoons. Now and then they rallied sufficiently to give vivid and not entirely consistent descriptions of the bearded ruffian who had carried off their sister despite their efforts to protect her. When they could delay no further, they pointed in the direction opposite to the one Stamati had taken.

The villagers set out, determined to rescue Evdokia. But in the clear light of the morning, one by one they returned, admitting failure.

Mitso had called up his cousins to the fifth remove to avenge the family honour. While they held a council of war, Kati quietly took her father aside and told him the truth. She faced him with a pale desperation which forced him to hear her out.

When he fully understood, he let out a great roar of laughter. What a girl she was! How wise and how sensible! With Evdokia married off, the way would be open for Kati and Elli to follow. And meanwhile there would be peace in his household again.

To get rid of the cousins was now

It takes

2

lips to test

a what?

See back cover

ER489 - 2417 - G

A WORD OF ADVICE TO WEARERS OF FALSE TEETH

Any Dentist will tell you that after extractions your gums gradually continue to change shape. However well made, your denture may become loose and suction fails to keep it in place at all times. A plate which is loose or rocks, or drops when chewing, talking or laughing destroys self-confidence and often causes shyness.

A denture fixative like Dr. Wernet's Powder is the answer to these embarrassing moments. Dr. Wernet's is a hygienic tasteless powder recommended by Dentists all over the world. You simply sprinkle it on your plate every morning and for the rest of the day you can forget your teeth. Wernet's holds the denture firm and comfortable and prevents any soreness of the gums. You can eat what you like, laugh and talk without fear.

Why suffer mouth discomfort another day when you can prove the amazing difference Dr. Wernet's Powder makes. Get a tin from your chemist to-day.

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OUT FRIDAY, 22nd AUGUST—2/3d.

rather a problem. Mitso told them he had information which might lead him to Evdokia, but that there were reasons why he must follow it up alone. After all, it was his duty first. "Be sure I will call upon you again if needed," he cried, striking a heroic pose. "And if I fall to the ravisher, you must avenge me."

Swearing not to fail, the cousins adjourned to share a huge breakfast, served to them by Mitso's wife and Kati and Elli, who were light-headed with the success of their plan. The wine ran freely, and thoughts of battle gave way to laughter and song.

Mitso went alone to the hollow in the hillside where Kati had told Stamati to lie hidden with his reluctant love.

There they lay, indeed, and most innocently. Stamati had long since unmuffled Evdokia's head, only to meet the astonished stare of her pair of fine eyes, and the lashing of a tongue he had never dreamed could be shrewish.

He had not dared to untie her wrists. After screaming and kicking for an hour, Evdokia had lain back exhausted and sobbed herself to sleep. To have given up Christos in her heart, only to find that her abductor was the despised Stamati!

Stamati lay sadly leaning upon an elbow watching over his heart's desire, already resolved to take her back home when she awoke. . . .

Mitso gave a satisfied smile when he saw them. He had been thinking hard as he came over the hills. He was well contented with Kati's ruse, and determined to pay due heed to her last warnings. That girl had her head screwed on. Everything depended now upon how he played his cards.

When Stamati saw Mitso coming, he cowered back in expectation of a deprived father's natural violence. Mitso was armed with a large revolver, which in Stamati's eyes seemed even larger than it was; seemed to grow, indeed, moment by moment. He stared at it as Mitso carefully tethered his mule and came towards them. When Mitso stood over them, he tried to make himself as small a target as possible, burrowing against the still sleeping Evdokia.

Mitso took a deep introductory breath. "Son of a dog!" he bellowed, with all the force of good lungs. The drink, he reflected, had not yet hurt his wind. "Vile seducer! I've caught you now, have I?"

He twirled his fierce moustaches with one hand and brandished the revolver in the other.

I must die, thought Stamati. *Well, I deserve it.* He felt a moment's regret for the long years of life which might have been his.

At that moment, Evdokia moved beside him, and he realized that she had woken. He tore his eyes from the gun for a moment to look down at her. And she looked so lovely, lying there, wide-eyed and dishevelled, that he suddenly felt it was all worth while. Better to die than to live without her into old age; and, if die he must, then he would die bravely.

"Stand up!" Mitso roared, kicking him with one booted foot. "Stand up, so that I can shoot out your liver and that of your slut."

Stamati rose unsteadily to his feet. Then he saw, with horror, that the revolver was pointed, not at him as it should have been, but at Evdokia. He threw himself in the way, exclaiming passionately: "Do what you will with me, but spare your daughter!"

"Spare that disgrace to my house, that light-o'-love? Never!" Mitso dodged round to take a new aim.

"She is innocent," cried Stamati desperately, again throwing himself between them. "I swear to you I alone am guilty. She did not come willingly, and she is untouched."

"I will shoot you first, then, and the baggage afterwards," declared Mitso majestically. He was thinking that his daughter's bound wrists spoiled his effect.

Evdokia lay there astonished, protected by Stamati's body from her father's fire. Her mind was a whirl, but one thing seemed certain. Stamati, the bashful boy, the butt of her cruel jokes, was after all no coward, no lightweight. He was a man; a man who loved her enough to protect her at risk of his life.

All dreams of Christos receded into the background. What could a man matter who left a girl without word for six years? What a fool she had been, what a fool, not to realize that here at home was a man, strong and brave, who loved her even to death!

Darting round Stamati, she threw herself at her father's feet. "Spare him, spare him!" she cried.

Mitso looked from one to the other, trying to control the smile which tugged at his lips under the fierce moustaches. Stamati said nothing, but came up beside Evdokia and pressed her to him. She continued to plead, pouring out impassioned words and now and then stealing a glance at Stamati with eyes full of love. The air about them was fresh, frost-touched, slowly warming to the glory of day.

When Mitso thought it time to relent, he lowered the gun. "There is only one way he can buy his life," he said to Evdokia portentously.

Frozen in attitudes of despair and defiance, the two young people waited.

"He must make an honest woman of you."

There was a long silence. Evdokia dared not look at Stamati. She had treated him so badly; suppose he rejected her now? For she knew that his courage had won her true love.

"Do you refuse?" barked Mitso at last.

Stamati shifted from one leg to the other.

"Well . . ." he began, and found to his horror that he could not bring out what he wanted to say. All his old shyness had come flooding back. What he felt was that it was a bit hard that his life should depend on his marrying Evdokia, since she wouldn't have him, and he wanted nothing else in the world. But not a word of it all could he say.

"You hesitate?" growled Mitso. "You have brought shame on my house, ruined my daughter's good name. . . ."

Evdokia began to plead, to urge that Stamati had done her no wrong. Mitso hurriedly cut off the denials he had no wish to hear.

Then there was an awkward pause, during which he began to despair of Stamati. Surely they'd not had all this bother for nothing?

Slowly he brought up his revolver again. "Will you marry her, or die like the dog you are?"

"If Evdokia will have me," said Stamati, recovering the power of speech as if by miracle as he looked at his love's tortured face.

"I will. Oh, I will," she breathed, gazing admiringly at the gallant figure he made, confronting her father unarmed.

Stamati's mouth fell open in astonishment. He recovered himself to lift her from the ground and give her a long kiss.

WHEN they returned to the village, they called at the house of the *papas* to arrange the wedding.

At home, meanwhile, Kati and Elli were working away at Kati's trousseau. They had never done needlework in daylight before, because there were always so many other jobs to be done in the house and the fields.

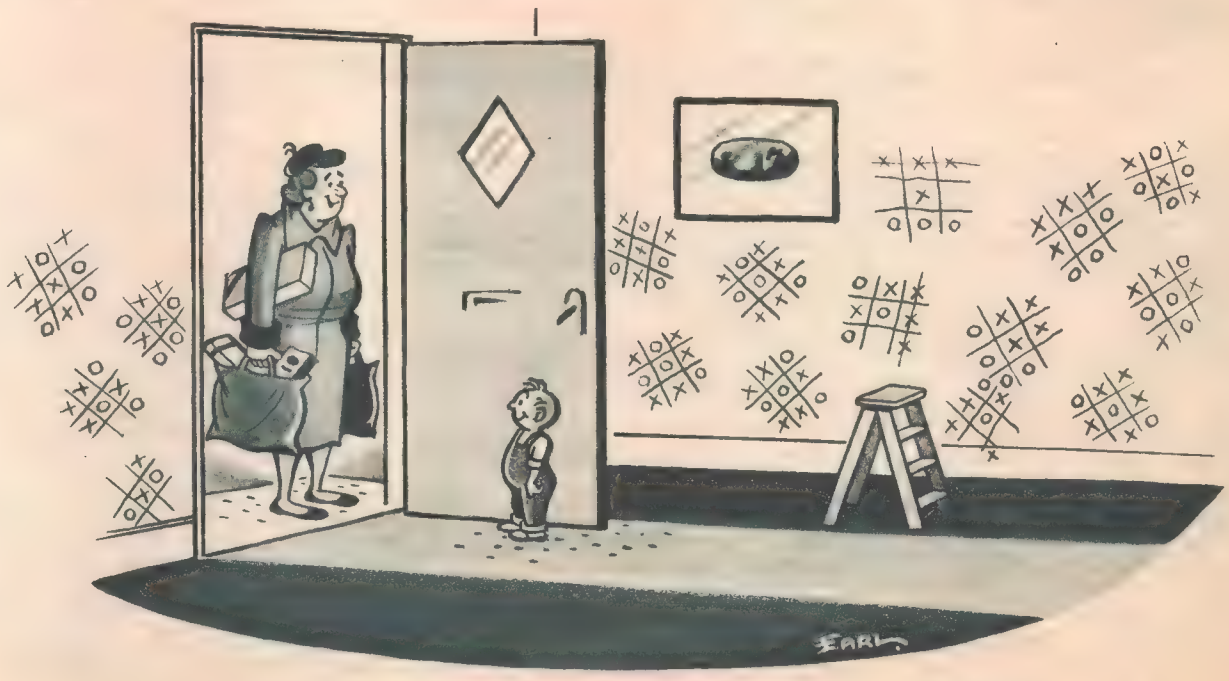
But this was an emergency. Both were determined it should not take as long as Evdokia's had done. For, when it was finished, there would be Elli's to begin. THE END

© *Kate Mango, 1958*

CHANGE—1

Consider how hard it is to change yourself and you'll understand what little chance you have trying to change others.

Jacob M. Braude



". . . and what have you been doing while Mummy was out?"

I guessed what the Black Rose might do to my little slave-girl. Yet I had left her facing death . . . alone

AMBUSH AT MOONRISE

by BRIAN CLEEVE

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

DISGUISED as a tramp, I came to the mountain farm where *la Rosa Nera*, The Black Rose, lived with her aged mother and a ruthless Italian-American ex-gangster and bandit named Leo Amintore.

The Rose and Leo were leaders of a gang of smugglers operating in the Dolomites. And I was, in fact, an agent of the Italian police. . . .

I got a job at the farm and, as the days passed, I felt a growing personal hatred for the Black Rose. Her brutality to Benvenuta, an orphan girl employed in the house, wrenched at my heart.

Then, late on my seventh night there, I heard the Rose talking by short-wave radio to Leo, who had gone off some days before. "Tomorrow by the Bida path at moonrise," I heard her say.

It was enough. The Bida path led across the frontier. Tomorrow, at moonrise, the police would be waiting there—if I could get word to them. But before I left I had to smash the radio transmitter, to prevent the Rose warning Leo.

Later that night, as I fumbled for the radio in the darkness of the farm kitchen, I sent a bottle crashing to the floor. Even as I turned, the Black Rose appeared in the doorway. I hurled the radio at her in the same moment that her revolver spat fire towards me. Then a sledge-hammer seemed to crash against my head, and I knew nothing more. . . .

PART TWO

Fear In The Barn

IT was so dark when I came to that I thought I had gone blind. I had a pain in my head like a trip hammer. At three seconds' interval came a dull slam of pain as though my temple was trying to burst.

There was pain, too, in my wrists and feet. I tried to move and straw rustled under me. Another inch, and I rolled off something down a slope of straw and struck bare wood with my knee and shoulder.

From a dull hammering the pain shot through my temple like a fire and for a long second I couldn't breathe with the agony. I could only stay doubled up on the wooden planks with my hands tied behind me and my ankles lashed together.

Then it died down to the old, dull hammering again and it was almost luxury, almost like no pain

I dragged her off the path out of the moonlight. She was fighting and clawing in my arms, her teeth sinking into my hand till I thought they must meet on bone

Soon the giant would come for me as I lay helpless. There

at all. And my head was clearer. I could see. There was a straw in front of my nose and some kind of insect was crawling up it to the bend.

Slowly, infinitely slowly, I turned my head. I was in the barn again, that I'd left—how long before? An hour, two hours, two days?—to listen to the Rose taking her radio message from Leo Amintore.

Moonlight still slanted through the gaps in the roof on the far side of the loft. If it was the same night, barely an hour could have gone by. But was it?

Then I remembered the message the Rose had received—that Leo would be coming the following night at moonrise. And once he came and knew that I was a spy, I wouldn't be lying here. I wouldn't be alive.

So it must still be the same night. One, maybe two in the morning. I pressed my wrists sideways against the ropes tying them and they were as hard and firm as wire.

I stretched my ankles back until my fingertips could touch them and the ropes there. But the knots were in front of the ankles and I couldn't reach them.

And in twenty-four hours' time, maybe twenty, Leo Amintore would be stepping into this barn, with his iron hands and his face like hacked stone. There would be a time then that I didn't like to think about. And after that?

"Let it be quick," I whispered. A rat scuttled at the sound of my voice. *Let it be quick.* In the rules they always say, "Never despair. Never give up. You're never beaten till you're dead." But I was already as good as dead.

You're not, said the policeman in my mind. *Do something. Find something.*

Find what? My fingers touched the planks of the floor, brushing them, searching, the feeling nearly gone from them with the pain of my wrists, the rope like a tourniquet. If only I could find a rusty nail that might fray the rope. Anything.

I brushed and searched, and the pain was so bad that I found the tears were running down my face and tasting salt and warm in my mouth. Or perhaps it was blood.

THEN the moonlight faded, and it was dark again, and for a terror-stricken moment I thought it was my eyes that had gone dark and I wanted to scream.

Keep hold, said the policeman who calls himself my conscience. *Tight hold.* I kept hold by cursing him under my breath, and all the police, and Captain Pelletti, and the job, and the Rose, and the rat that was rustling in the darkness.

Roll across the floor and search. Roll and search again. Something touched me out of the dark and this time I couldn't keep hold. It was a hand, cold on my face. *"Mamma di Gesú,"* I croaked, wanting to scream until the bats woke in the rafters.

"Hush, Ugo, hush," a voice whispered against my ear, and fingers were across my mouth.

"Benvenuta!" I said.

"Hush," she whispered again. "Thank God you're alive. She made me help her to drag you here, and then she tied you up and all the time I thought that you were dead. . . ."

The words came out in a whispering rush like water falling. My face was between her hands, and she was crying, the tears splashing on to my forehead.

"Benvenuta!" I whispered.

"I love you," she said, between her tears. "And I thought that you were dead."

Love? What did a poor little waif like Benvenuta know about loving anybody? Yet it was very good to feel her hands against my face. They were cool and healing, even though the fingers were rough from a small lifetime of scrubbing and chopping wood and soaping stone floors.

"You were so kind to me," she breathed. "Always smiling at me. And that first day, you knew I was hungry and gave me back the bread. Like my mother. And Sister Angela in the Home. But I never knew a man be kind like that."

Inside me the policeman said: *Your hands. Tell her to untie your hands.*

"My hands," I whispered, and felt the lowest swine in the world to cut across her love like that with my own affairs.

"Oh, *mamma mia*!" she said. "Forgive me, Ugo, I'm such a fool." And I felt worse. But her fingers were at my wrist, straining and pulling and wanting not to hurt at the same time. She broke a fingernail, and I heard her suck her breath with the pain.

One knot. Two. And a fraction of ease at my left wrist. Three knots. And suddenly one hand was loose and hung like wood at the end of its arm, dead with bloodlessness. Then it was on fire with agony as the pain came back, and the other hand began to keep it company.

FOR a long minute I sat nursing them in my lap, while Benvenuta kneeled at my feet, almost invisible in the moonless darkness. There was a pale shadow where her thin back curved over my bound feet. It was the dark shadow of her hair. I reached out and touched her head and felt her turn it to look at me as her fingers struggled with the rope at my ankles.

"Now you are free," she said, and the pain began in my feet. But I hardly knew that it was there. I was holding her face between my hands, as a few minutes earlier she had held mine. The bones were so fine they were like ivory. So thin. I touched her shoulders and they were like the wings of a bird under the ragged blouse.

Hurry, said the policeman of my conscience. *You've got to get away.*

"Come with me," I whispered. "It won't be safe for you to stay now. I'll see you're looked after. . . ." Somehow, I'd drawn her up to me until she was in my arms. "Come with me," I whispered again.

Her lips were cold as moonlight under mine. I felt her heart beating in her thin, childish body as if it were trying to escape. "I can't," she whispered. "I daren't. Where would I go?"

Where could I say? To the police barracks?

"The Rose will kill you," I said. "Trust me to bring you away." And all the time the policeman was saying, *You're mad. You're stark mad.*

"She won't know I helped you," Benvenuta said. "She barred me into my room when she'd finished tying you here. But I worked the bar loose with a nail from the inside. I managed to push it through a crack in the door and lift the bar up. That was why I was so long in coming. When I go back I can put it in place again."

I tried to stand up, and she put her shoulder under my arm to help me.

"Are you sure you'll be safe?" I said. I knew that it was going to take all my strength to get away by myself—down from the mountains in the darkness. And that was the job that had to be done, not looking after waifs like Benvenuta. I've often wished that I wasn't a policeman, but never more than then.

I felt her nod her head against my shoulder.

"Then let's go," I whispered. "I'll see you safe back inside."

"No," she breathed, clinging to me. "No. She might hear us."

"Then she'll hear both of us," I said. "I'll drop the bar on the outside of your door for you."

Even a policeman could do that much. And there was the radio; that was enough excuse. I had to see that it was out of action. The fall when I'd thrown it might not have been enough.

I found my boots and put them on, for what good they were. I picked up a rough stake that was lying on the straw.

"All right," I said. I had her shoulder under one arm, and the stake in my other hand as a crutch. It was twelve miles to the nearest police post on a track that I knew, or about six to the nearest frontier post, through country that I didn't know, in pitch darkness. It would have to be the twelve miles. But first the radio. And Benvenuta.

"Does the old woman sleep in the kitchen?" I whispered. It had been her waking in her chair by the stove that had ruined everything before.

"No. She only sits there very late. By now she'll be long ago in bed."

We were at the kitchen door. Benvenuta opened it softly and I felt the stone flags underfoot. Benvenuta was leading me by the hand as if I were a blind man and she were my dog. And I had time to think: *She's threaded this kitchen so often in the dark. Late at night. In the mornings before dawn. Lighting fires. Sweeping ashes. And now I'm leaving her, maybe to be killed.*

Then we went in through the inner door and across the passage. Benvenuta's hand closed on mine to tell me that we were there; lifted it and put it against the latch, and then against the bar.

The door swung softly open, and I had the sense one gets even in the dark of smallness and stuffiness, as if it were a cupboard being opened rather than a room.

Her fingers brushed my lips, pressed them, and in that moment I would have given everything in the world to put my arms round her, hold her against me, take her out of that airless, windowless cupboard and kiss her under the stars in the clean air of the night. But the Rose was sleeping somewhere within five paces of us. And the old woman. And the Rose had a gun, and I had a job to do.

There was just that pressure of fingers on my lips and then nothing. Benvenuta was gone, with the door drawing to.

Goodnight, I whispered in my mind. *I'll come back. God keep you safe.*

I let the bar sink fraction by fraction into place, into its iron sockets. The latch dropped out of my fingers in my effort to be silent, and clicked, iron against iron.

It sounded like a gunshot in the stiff, thick silence, like an iron bell. Behind the door I heard Benvenuta catch her breath.

I froze for a second and stepped back, out of the passage. I had to keep away from Benvenuta's door at all costs. I stopped again and listened, and thought of the Rose waking, listening, coming with her gun.

The sweat was like ice in the small of my back. I remembered the stake in my hand. I mustn't hit it against the floor. Why in the name of heaven hadn't I left it outside?

I listened, and listened.

There was nothing stirring in the house. Nothing.

MY breath drifted out in a long, agonizing sigh. Now for the radio. Had the Rose picked it up? I brushed the floor by the doorway with my fingers. Nothing. Nothing. I moved a foot farther along the wall, and there it was, lying face down, its batteries hanging out of its back in a tangle of wires. I took the wires in my hands and snapped them, one by one, wrenching them out of their soldering. Then the valves, putting them in the pocket of my shirt. Last of all I wrenched at some unknown things inside, silently gutting the radio like a fish. Even if the Rose knew how to mend a ruin like that and had the parts, it would take her more than the time she had if she were to warn Leo that I was a spy, and that I might know about their rendezvous on the Bida path, at moonrise that night.

Now to get out of the kitchen. I went step by step, until the night was on my face like perfume after the horror of that house. Then I was twenty yards from it, then fifty. There was grass track under my feet, and the night air was clearing my head. I hardly needed the stake except as a walking stick.

I went up over the lip of the valley, and for a second, as I had only one short week before, I stood and looked down at the farmhouse, barely visible now in the darkness, with no more than the stars to light it, and all round it were the ghostly shadows of the mountains. I shuddered, and went down the path as fast as I could.

IT took me nearer six hours than five to cover that twelve miles, slipping and scrambling down a path like a sheep track in the darkness. Once I hit my head on the ground and lay half stunned again for maybe half an hour. Soon after that I found a stream of water and bathed my head in it.

The water was cold as ice on my face, and like fire in the long shallow groove the Rose's bullet had ploughed across my temple. At least, I hoped it was shallow. I was afraid to do more than touch it with my fingertips. Even that lifted the top of my head like a trap door.

Then I went on down the track again, the eastern sky above the mountain peaks lightening, as if a great oyster were slowly opening, showing the mother of pearl inside, then turning to rose, and great scarlet tongues licking upwards from the night-black mountains. Then the path was suddenly visible at my feet, and that great bonfire of the dawn was behind me.

I made good time after that, and a church clock was chiming nine as I saw the flag drooping above the small wayside police post. A sergeant was sitting in his shirt sleeves behind last night's *Corriere,* an empty coffee cup beside him, a cigarette smouldering into ash on the edge of the desk. The paper lowered as I limped in, propping myself against the door jamb.

"Lieutenant Manelli, security police," I said. I saw him looking at me, his mouth slowly opening, and realized what he was seeing: a man who had purposely looked like a tramp a week ago, and now looked like a ruin, with a bullet wound in my head and blood on my unshaven, filthy cheeks, and the remains of my boots like anklets flapping on my shins.

"Lieutenant Manelli?" said the sergeant. "Well I'm. . . ." He broke off. "Your Captain Pelletti told us to look out for you."

"Captain Pelletti. . . ." I felt as if a strong arm had been put round my shoulders. I hadn't realized until then how alone I'd felt all that past week. It was as if the captain were in the room with me, with his soft Venetian accent that could sound like an iron file when he wanted it to, and the cheeks that looked as if they had been shaved with an emery stone.

"Captain Pelletti," I said. "Please try and get him for me on the phone."

A policeman had come in from another room, and at a sign from the sergeant he put a chair for me and fetched me coffee, hot coffee in a mug, and a white roll fresh and warm out of the stove, melting in my mouth. And I remembered Benvenuta and her black bread and sour wine that she had brought me that first night, and suddenly I wasn't hungry any more.

"Benvenuta," I said.

"What was that?" The sergeant looked up at me from the phone. I shook my head and he went on trying

would be a time then that I didn't like to think about . . .

to get the connection, small, invisible voices twittering in the receiver, until at last he was through. "Captain Pelletti? Your Lieutenant Manelli is here. Sergeant Brunelleschi speaking, San Matteo. Yes . . . yes . . . no. . . ." The sergeant glanced at my head. "He looks as if. . . ." But before he could say I looked as if I'd been shot, I had the phone out of his hand.

"Captain? Ugo here. It's the place we want all right. The Rose is there. And Leo Amintore . . . Amintore . . . yes . . . no . . . he'll be coming back tonight . . . no, I don't know what he's bringing . . . along the Bida path at moonrise. No, she can't warn him. I smashed the radio. . . ."

The captain's voice very soft and faint at the other end of the wire, mile on mile away across the quiet summer countryside. There was harvest in the fields and the peaches golden against old farmhouse walls. And Benvenuta was with the Rose.

"I want permission to go back to the farmhouse immediately, Captain . . . and to use a gun. . . ."

"Impossible. If the Rose is going to warn Amintore herself, on foot, she'll have gone already. But I don't think she'll try to cross the frontier by daylight. And I'll want you with me."

"But Captain——"

"No buts. I'll need you tonight. Get some food and rest. I'll pick you up at San Matteo at five o'clock. I'll have clothes for you. Understand?"

"*Capito*," I said. How could I explain that there was a girl, a girl with a white, frightened face, who might be dead by nightfall, who might be dead now? "*Capito*," I said again, very slowly, and the sergeant took the phone from my stiff hand. I heard the click as the connection died.

"You need a doctor," the sergeant said. He seemed very far away.

Then there was an arm under mine, and the doorway into an inner room was leaning curiously towards me. Maybe it was Benvenuta who was helping me. But it was not her voice. . . . There was a bed with a patch quilt on it and sunlight coming in through a small, dusty window.

I was so tired, and my body was falling, falling. . . .

I had a sense of time passing and of voices. A man was bending over me and hands were touching my head. There was a smell of spirits and a stinging pain in the wound that was curiously soothing even while it hurt. And at last a voice said: "Nothing much. More bruise than wound. Probably nothing inside the head to get damaged. A Neapolitan. Solid between the ears."

A hand clapped my shoulder. Then quietness. *How did he know I was a Neapolitan?* It was a long time since I'd been home . . . the cliff we dived from . . . the water green and veined as marble far, far below . . . I'd bring Benvenuta there . . . teach her to swim. . . .

BY the time I woke it was four o'clock. The pain in my head was almost gone, and I was raging with hunger. I showered in the little corrugated iron bath house behind the post, and shaved with a borrowed razor, and felt like a new man, except for the thought of Benvenuta that woke with me like an aching tooth and stayed with me even while I wolfed cheese and salami and drank the sergeant's wine. It stayed with me while I was greeting Captain Pelletti and changing back into my uniform, while the three jeeps and the fourteen men of the patrol waited outside, their carbines between their knees. . . .

* * *

Although it must have been barely fifteen miles in a straight line to the Bida path, it was nearer eighty by the roads we had to take and it was twilight before we got within foot distance of it, leaving the jeeps drawn up under a quiet avenue of trees on a country road. And it was almost dark before we were in position.

The Bida path runs by the narrow, tumbling Bida river from the frontier post to the little village of Ponte di Bida seven miles to the south-east. A dozen foot tracks forked from it to different farms, and there were other tracks as well. Tracks that smugglers used, leading to parts of the frontier so wild and rugged that the patrols could scarcely cover them.

Any one of them might be the one that Leo Amintore would come by. And he might be planning to cache his smuggled goods in any of a hundred places besides the Rose's farm. But if he were going to use the Bida route at all, as he'd told the Rose he would, there was one part of it that he must use—a narrow pass like a rifle sight notched in a jagged mountain ridge, with the river running over tangled rocks fifty feet below the footpath.

He must come out of the pass into a little basin of rough turf and bushes, a hundred feet across—a basin dotted with thick, twisted clumps of holm-oak and laurel.

That was where we set ourselves to wait for him, fourteen men with carbines, and the captain and I with machine pistols in our laps. And I had nothing but Benvenuta in my mind, a little waif of a girl I'd known for a week and held in my arms once, and who might be already dead.

I didn't speak of her to the captain. What was there to say? I could only wait, the stars like frost in the sky, and the cold settling on us, gripping our faces and our knees.

At last the sky above the mountain peaks began to lighten, until it glowed like a great dome of pearl.

"Almost moonrise," said the captain softly.

AWAY to the left the stream of the Bida snarled and chuckled in its jagged stone bed. A bird whistled mockingly in the darkness and I wondered what bird it was. A hundred yards up the path a stone slid and rattled, and I caught my breath. The captain's fingers closed on my wrist.

"It's from the wrong side of us," I whispered.

"Hush." I felt him easing his pistol upwards, sliding back the catch. Was it a peasant going home? A fox? Or a double ambush, taking us from the rear?

Another scrape of stone, nearer now. A footstep? The river drowned it with its noise.

There. Again. And in the starlight a figure was coming up the path, into the little basin of grassland where we were, climbing towards the pass.

It was tall and lithe, and swinging like a mountaineer. But it was a woman, the Black Rose, coming to warn her man.

She came swinging up the path. Ten yards. Five. Until I could see her face and the hard shadows under her cheekbones and her brows.

"Stand still and raise your hands," said Captain Pelletti in a soft, conversational voice.

She began to whirl, her hand dropping to her belt for her gun. All round her the bolts of carbines snicked gently into place and shadows moved, steadying their aim. Her hand stopped, moved slowly upwards.

"Both hands," said the captain. "Now kneel down." He turned to me. "Handcuff her, Ugo. I shouldn't bother to be gentle."

I slid the cuffs out of my belt, trying to moisten my lips. To touch her would be like touching a cobra, and even a cobra with a broken back is still a cobra. I opened the jaws of the cuffs and stepped towards her, and she watched me coming, recognizing me, her eyes like black diamonds in the starlight, her face pale as white stone, very clear now in the rising light of the moon as it lipped a mountain top.

"The little spy," she said, as I came close. There was hatred in her eyes like poisoned steel.

"Hold out your hands," I whispered, and she held out her left wrist. "What have you done with Benvenuta?"

Her eyes went wide and black in a way that stopped my heart. "What have you done to her?" I whispered again in terror. And for answer she spat full in my eyes, reaching her head forward like a snake to do it, striking like a cobra.

In that second, along the path beyond the notch of the pass, metal clinked on stone. The moon had risen, and Leo Amintore was coming, was less than a hundred yards away.

The Rose heard it too, lifting her head to listen. Then threw it back, opening her mouth to shout in warning, cupping her free hand to her lips while I held the other in its silver bracelet.

One shout and Leo and whoever was with him would be gone like the wind. I dropped the handcuffs and flung myself on to her, pressing the palm of my hand over her mouth. She closed her teeth in it but I had her fast, pulling her head back against my chest, feeling her whalebone body whip and shudder with the effort to break free.

I dragged her to one side out of the path, out of the moonlight.

She was fighting and clawing in my arms, her teeth sinking into my hand till I thought they must meet on bone. I dragged her off the path, under the shadow of an oak, holding her close as a lover, with her nails raking at my face, then clawing and fumbling for her gun, while I daren't move my hands from her mouth, and none of the fifteen men watching us dared move to come to my help, in case Leo and his men heard the movement and took fright.

I held her with my elbows and knees, the weight of my body, my hands on her mouth, her head locked against my heart. How much longer? Would they never come?

Benvenuta fell at my feet in a thin, sprawling heap. And I felt sure, then, that she was dead

SUDDENLY between one glance and the next, the path was filled with a file of seven men, Leo walking like a bowed giant at their head, carrying a metal box. And quite quietly the captain and the others rose up out of the shadows, their carbines aiming, the captain's voice as soft as if he were greeting guests.

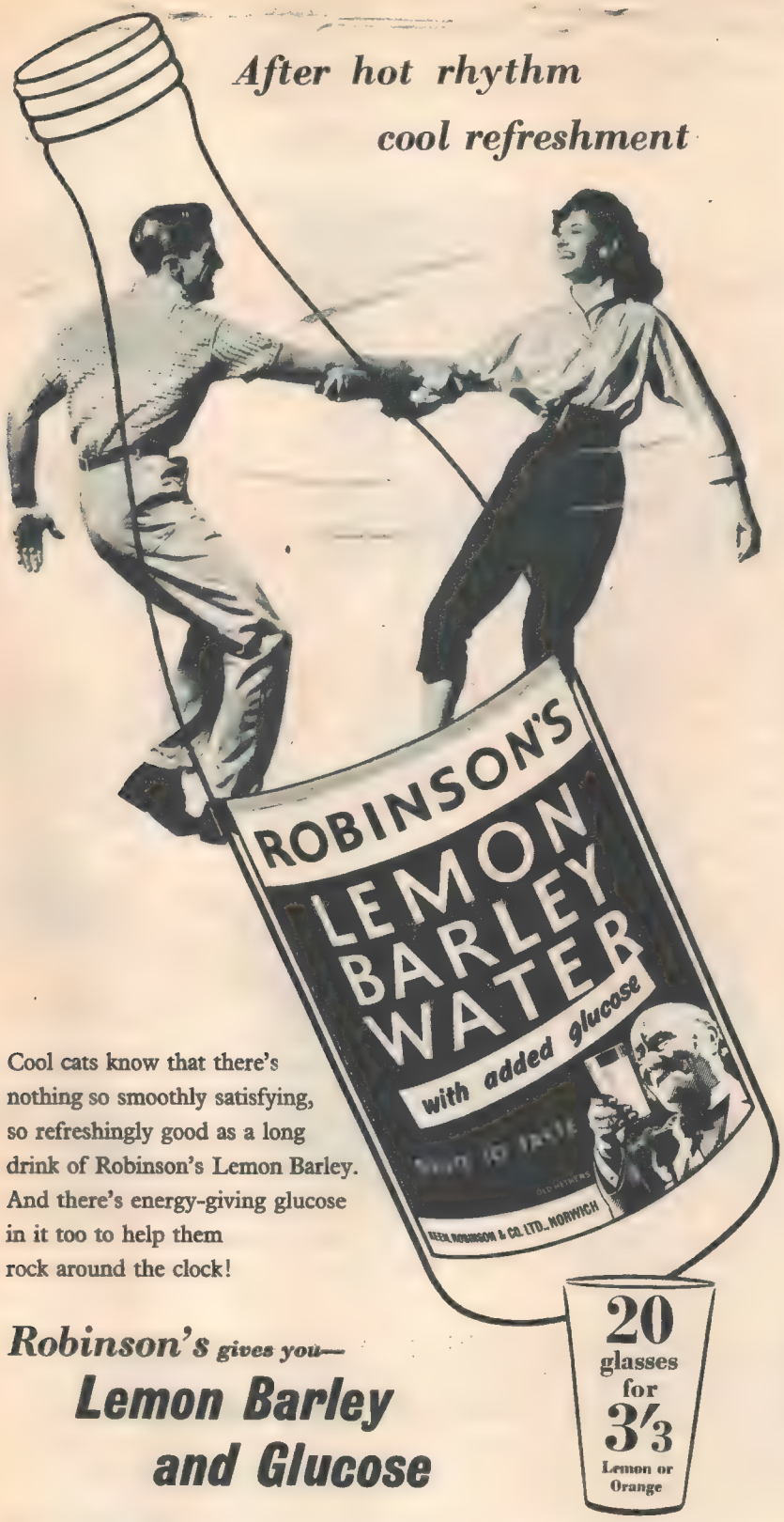
"Lie down flat on your faces please. The first man to reach for his gun will be shot dead."

Only Leo disobeyed. I saw his box fall, that afterwards we found packed with heroin. I saw his hands moving like pale blurs in the moonlight. Captain Pelletti's pistol coughed softly, apologetically, and Leo jerked, and his body bent in half and fell slowly forwards, like a tree. I felt almost sorry for him, the big, childish, boasting giant of a man who should have lived five hundred years ago. He might have become a duke then, instead of a dead bandit in the mountains.

I let my hands loose from the Rose's mouth, half forgetting her as the huge body sprawled across the path, and twitched, and lay still. It was then

After hot rhythm

cool refreshment



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that she screamed "Leo! Leo!" as if her soul was being torn. She wrenched away from me, throwing herself down on the path beside him, touching him, whispering, then rocking back on her heels, swinging her blind head to and fro in an agony of sorrow.

For perhaps a minute we stood and watched, letting her have her grief. Then at last Captain Pelletti went close to her and touched her shoulder.

"Come," he said.

She stood up at that, turning blindly from one to another of us as we stood round her and the six smugglers lying frozen in terror on the moonlit path, afraid to do more than breathe. She looked at me, her eyes glittering with tears and hatred.

"Benvenuta," she whispered, as if she were cursing, and I felt the cold certainty in my heart that Benvenuta was dead. One of the men took the Rose's gun and snapped the other handcuff on her wrist.

"Take them all down to the jeeps," the captain was saying.

"Wait," I said. "Rosa. For God's sake tell me. What have you done with Benvenuta?"

"Go and see," she whispered. "Go and see, little spy." And for the second time she spat full in my eyes. I came

CHANGE—2

All weak men lay an exaggerated stress on not changing one's mind.

Somerset Maugham

as near then to killing a woman as I've ever done.

"Can I go?" I said to the captain, as if he must know what I was talking about, who Benvenuta was.

"Somebody at the farm?" he said. "Take two men. Pietro. Guido. Go with the *tenente*."

But I didn't wait for them. I went like the wind down the path that the Rose had come by, the moon throwing my shadow on the rocks. There was a mile of twisting track, and then a fork, and a battered sign saying that Ponte di Bida lay down to the left.

I went up the right-hand fork, over a ridge, down a steep fall of hillside where the path was naked rock between great boulders, my heart slamming against my ribs, my breath like jagged stones in my throat. Then over another ridge, and another, until I was into a familiar valley, the long roof of the farmhouse dark in the moonlight, except for the leprous patches of the new shingles that I had put there—how long ago?

I ran till the sweat poured on me like a river, and my legs staggered. If I had stopped I would have fallen like a foundered horse. I could only run and run, my heart crying: "Benvenuta! Benvenuta!" my mind seeing a pale, thin face thrown back on a stone floor, with a blackened hole between the eyes.

Then I was at the door of the farmhouse, and inside, in the darkness and chill of the stone.

"Benvenuta! Benvenuta!" My voice echoed in the silence. *Oh God, let her not be dead.* I ran into the passage, to the door of her cupboard room. And the bar was in place.

Quite suddenly my legs stopped and I couldn't call out again. Because she knew how to lift the bar from inside—if she was alive. And it was still in place.

Then my hand reached out to it and lifted it. And the door began to swing, pressed by a weight from the inside; like the weight of a body lying dead against it. . . .

She fell at my feet in a thin, sprawling heap, in her ragged white blouse and with her bone thin shoulders and childish arms and legs. And I kneeled down and held her body in my arms.

I was so sure that she was dead; so sure that even the flutter of her heart meant nothing to me for the moment. Until she moved, and I saw that her eyes were wide open and dark as midnight, ringed with the shadows of fear and exhaustion, and her hand touched my face, as if she couldn't believe that I was there.

"Did I faint?" she said. "I was so afraid. She said she'd kill me if I tried to come out of the room. Even when I was alone I was afraid to try. The old woman ran away. Down to somebody in Ponte Di Bida. She said the Signora Rosa was coming back to shoot me, and she didn't want to be here."

"Hush," I whispered. "Hush. None of it matters now."

But she had to talk, as if she were afraid of the silence coming again. "I think she knew that I must have helped you escape," she said. "Only she wasn't sure. And I think she was afraid of what the Signor Leo might say . . . she was going to wait for him . . . and then . . . and then. . . ." She hid her face against my chest.

"She's caught now," I said. "You're safe. Safe for ever. Safe with me."

"With you?" she whispered, and it was like morning coming in that thin face, with its child's mouth and woman's eyes. "Always with you?"

"Always," I said. "Always."

Outside the house I heard the two policemen trotting towards the door. But still I kneeled there with Benvenuta in my arms.

THE END

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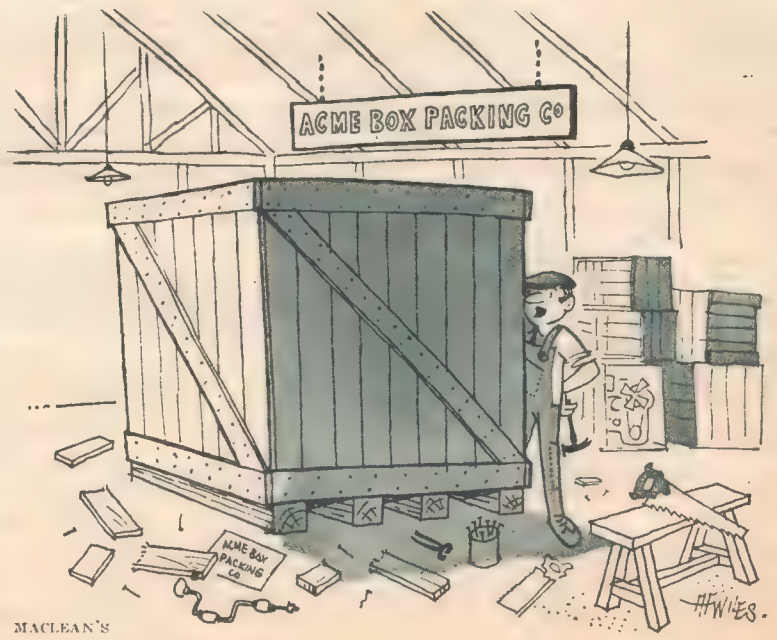

"Well, that's another one. Alf—I say, Alf . . ."

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?

Two of which can test a what?

See back cover

ER488 - 2417 - G

Again and again the lorries stuck in the sand. And each time the order was: "Out you get and dig"

Eighty miles of agony

by JOHN MARSH and LYMAN ANSON

ILLUSTRATION BY SEABRIGHT

Into the castaways' camp stumbled two strangers. With them came the prospect of a nightmare ride—to safety

THE hot wind-blown sand stung the bare arms of the women and got into the eyes of the two-year-old baby girl, making her cry. Miserably the survivors of the liner Dunedin Star, thirsty, exhausted and despairing of ever being rescued, huddled in their makeshift tents to escape the fierceness of the afternoon sun.

Suddenly they stared in disbelief.

Skeleton Coast, they were told, was uninhabited. Throughout their fortnight on that vast, five hundred-mile stretch of beach, the loneliest in south-west Africa, they found no trace of human life other than the bones of earlier castaways. Yet coming towards the camp, stumbling in the sand, were two men.

Were they some kind of mirage—or even ghosts of shipwrecked sailors? Chief Officer John Davies, the castaways' leader, moved as if to go and meet them, then hesitated.

The men waved their arms in greeting, so he set off at once. Though weakened by the hardships of Skeleton Coast, Burn Wood, the ship's sixty-nine year old doctor, followed him.

The strangers were exhausted. They gasped: "Got any water to spare?"

When Davies assured them that there was still some left in the camp, one of them introduced himself as Captain Bill Hutchinson, of the Royal Army Medical Corps. He pointed to his bearded companion. "This is Captain William Smith, of the South-West African Police. He's in charge."

"In charge of what?" asked Davies.

"The police convoy."

Davies and Wood exchanged excited glances. Amazing news! The convoy was given up for lost. The castaways were told that it was leaving Windhoek, in the interior, but it faced a near-impossible trip, never before attempted, of six or seven hundred miles of desert, bush country and jungle. According to a recent note, dropped from a plane, there was no sign of it at all.

"Where are the lorries now?" asked Wood.

Smith pointed south along the coast. "Three miles away. Stuck—in sand up to the axles."

The two captains, looking tired and haggard enough to be survivors of a shipwreck themselves, were escorted to the camp.

Immediately, the newcomers were surrounded by the rest of the castaways, jubilant at a new hope of rescue.

The chance of reaching safety at last seemed incredible. The running aground of the Dunedin

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AQUASEAL

Star, on November 30, 1942, had been followed by a heart-breaking succession of rescue failures. Although twenty-eight of the castaways managed to get through the high-pounding surf and reach ships that were anchored there, thirty-nine were still left on the beach, enduring the blistering sun by day and the bitterly cold nights.

These included six women, among them a young mother with a baby girl, and Mrs. Lydia Saad-Moussa, an Egyptian passenger's wife who was six months pregnant. Also there was the steward's boy, Jones, who was suffering from hallucinations—he said that cannibals were on Skeleton Coast—and a pilot and the three members of a bomber crew. The latter tried to run an airlift, but when their plane landed could not take off again from the sand.

Catastrophe also overtook the Sir Charles Elliott, a tug that anchored offshore, but then tried to return to her base, Walvis Bay, several hundred miles to the south, because she was short of fuel. After only eighty miles she ran aground; two of her crew died.

When Smith said that the convoy came across the wreck of the tug, picked up the survivors and took them to a ridge of hard sand called Rocky Point, where Walvis Bay hoped to land a plane, the castaways' hopes soared farther. He added: "With luck, the same will be done for you."

The chill of evening arrived. Seated by the camp fire, after drinks of the castaways' precious water, the two captains told the fantastic story of their journey.

Reaching for a driftwood stick, Smith drew a rough sand map of their route. Starting north from Windhoek, the convoy, consisting of six troop carriers, a couple of two-ton lorries and a water trailer manned by a dozen n.c.o.s and men, plus six natives, set off north-west in a great arc until it reached the sea at Rocky Point. There it turned north again, parallel to the coast about eighty miles to where at that moment the convoy was firmly stuck in the sand.

"In all that area," he said, "there are only a few dependable landmarks. Two hundred miles out of Windhoek we have the railroad at Outjo, here"—the stick pointed—"then comes the police outpost here at Kamanjab, the last link with civilization before entering the wilderness called the Kaokoveld, which has to be crossed to reach Skeleton Coast."

"What are the roads like?" asked Mrs. Saad-Moussa, who was suddenly anxious about the return trip.

"For our last couple of hundred miles or so," said Smith, "there wasn't even a native trail—only ancient elephant tracks, three feet wide."

Over a meal Smith and Hutchinson described steering by distant mountain ranges through the Namib Desert, where the vehicles had to be manhandled out of the soft sand every few yards. Sometimes the vehicles plunged into solid-looking salt pans and had to be dug out; one day it took fourteen hours to cover little more than a mile.

When they came to a dried-up river, slopes had to be dug to get the vehicles down the steep banks.

For two days the men were ill after drinking stagnant water. Then they came to a huge area teeming with elephant, zebra, giraffe, springbok and leopard. It was lion country too, needing a fire burning all night.

Next was the "grand canyon," as Smith called it. This was a dry watercourse where cliffs rose perpendicularly on both sides of the convoy. In parts, a subterranean river gushed up through the rocks, and the wheels of the vehicles were swept by a surging stream. The canyon zig-zagged for twenty miles.

"Even in the shade of the cliffs, it was well over one hundred degrees," said Hutchinson.

"Too hot to touch any of the metal on the lorries," added Smith.

The convoy pushed ahead. Every few minutes the engines were switched off to let the radiators cool. The canyon was absolutely silent then, and the air dead. Not a breath stirred the scattered humps of parched grass. . . .

REFRESHED after the camp's hospitality, Smith and Hutchinson set off back to their convoy.

The castaways had much to occupy their thoughts that night, as they settled down on the sand, but they slept heavily, worn out by the tensions of a long day and the emotional heights of the last few hours.

First thing the next morning, Davies selected a small party, including the four airmen, to go to the convoy and help to free it. Wood insisted on joining the party, but Davies said: "No, not *you*, doctor."

"Why not? I'm as fit as any of you," Wood protested.

The party set out, Davies in the lead. After a while, he looked around and his eyebrows shot up at the sight of a slender, elderly man plodding along with the others. "What in thunder!" Davies roared. "Didn't I tell you to stay behind?"

"Doctor's orders, Chief!" said Wood with a grin.

Davies threw up his hands. Everybody in the party laughed.

It was the first laugh heard during that tramp across the burning dunes.

It was also the last. . . .

Sand quickly filled everyone's shoes, which became heavier and more painful with each step. One after another, the men began walking barefoot.

Smith, together with one of the

BEGINNING NEXT WEEK . . .

Lady Barbara joins her husband
for his latest, bravest exploit

HORNBLOWER'S HURRICANE
by C. S. FORESTER

Diamonds were the lure—into a cannibal-infested jungle

SHIRIANA

by Count Enrico Bentivoglio-Middleton

liner's passengers, a commander of the Royal Navy named Brian Hewitt, and Jimmy Thompson, an eighteen-year-old senior cadet, stuffed their shoes into their shirt fronts.

For Dr. Wood, carrying his shoes and socks in his hand, the heat and exertion were almost too much. When the convoy was reached and Smith and Hutchinson were waving a welcome, the doctor suddenly saw the whole beach rising around him, slowly at first, then faster.

The next moment, it seemed, he felt ridiculous lying on his back on the sand, with stubbled faces peering down at him.

Protesting weakly, he let himself be carried to some shade close to one of the trucks. That was all he remembered until he awoke to the sound of cursing. He sat up, looked around and saw everyone else manhandling one of the lorries. So he got to his feet, put his shoulder to the tailboard and helped to push the vehicle free.

It was a slow, exasperating trip to the castaways' camp. When the lorry had been dug out and hauled on to firmer ground, it travelled only a few yards before sinking into the sand again.

Eventually Captain Immins Naude, the pilot of the bomber which had tried to rescue the castaways, took Smith and Davies aside. "There's a knack of driving heavy vehicles through sand, and these men haven't got it," he said. "I've done some big game hunting with lorries in the Kalahari Desert east of the Kaokoveld, and if you gentlemen will let me have a try. . . ."

Smith and Davies agreed to do so instantly.

Taking the wheel of the lorry, Naude displayed such driving skill, making the vehicle rock by using the reverse and forward gears in quick succession, that, with the help of pushing from the others, and the laying of tarpaulins and wire netting, the lorry reached the camp of wildly cheering castaways by early afternoon.

By now the technique of sand-driving had been mastered so well that when the lorry picked up a full load of half of the castaways it made the return trip in just over an hour.

There was still time to collect the remaining castaways that day, and Davies, Smith and Naude did the arduous journey once again.

When the last of the castaways was aboard, everyone paused for a long, last, silent look at the camp that held so many memories—the canvas shelters, the discarded suitcases with contents not worth saving, the sleeping holes scooped out of the sand, the heap of ashes from the last campfire and, in the background, resting firm, six hundred yards offshore, the huge wreck of the Dunedin Star.

An hour and a half later the lorry completed its journey and the convoy was assembled.

Feeling that whatever lay ahead now would be simple compared to life on the beach, the castaways went to sleep with their minds at ease and their bodies relaxed.

They awoke before dawn, eager to begin the first leg of the eighty-mile trek to Rocky Point. At Davies's suggestion, they assigned the leadership of the expedition to Captain Smith. His first official act was to allot his passengers places in the lorries.

"The trip isn't going to be easy," he warned them cheerfully. "We'll ride as much as we can."

The castaways answered with cheers and smiles. Their blistered feet and swollen legs made any kind of riding sound good. The soldiers, knowing from experience what to expect, said nothing.

It was 8 a.m. before the six big lorries and the two smaller ones swung in a semi-circle and began the journey south.

The big troop carriers were uncomfortably crowded. Not all six could be used for passengers, since food, water, petrol, oil, bedding and spares had to be stored on some of them.

Except for places where long delays had been encountered before, the drivers tried to follow the tracks they had made on the northward trip. Smith and Hutchinson walked ahead, waving and shouting and trying to steer the convoy around the worst spots when possible. Their guidance helped, but not enough to keep the convoy moving for long. The eight vehicles had ground ahead laboriously for perhaps a quarter of a mile when, without warning, the leading lorry dropped through the crust of a salt pan into a mixture of sand and water. Half an hour was lost while it was dug out.

"Try to think of it as a nice hike in the country, dear"

Wood and Hutchinson were grateful for this interval of rest. The two doctors had been anxiously watching Mrs. Saad-Moussa try in vain to lessen the sharp jolting she was suffering. Something had to be done for her, so, after talking it over, they placed two mattresses, one above the other, on the floor of her lorry, directly behind the driver's seat. Then they hung a strap from the roof above. "If you'll stand on the mattress and hang on to this," they told her, "you'll be more comfortable."

That half-hour delay was the first, but not the longest, of the numerous halts throughout the day. Riding gave little rest to the women and none to the men. It was a continuous case of: "Out you get and dig." When, with spades, ropes, wire netting and much blasphemy, the vehicle in question was manhandled on to firmer ground, and they all climbed aboard, it would be but a few minutes before the cry, "Out you get," sounded again, and everyone who could walk had to get out once more and pull, push, dig or lift.

As the convoy slowly made its way south, new obstacles appeared. These were curious scrub growths. Each growth formed the core of a large sand-hill which looked innocent enough, but which concealed masses of tough roots. Manoeuvring around these sandhills was often impossible; the roots had to be chopped and smashed, and the lorries forced straight through them.

Often the convoy would be stuck for more than four hours, grind ahead for ten or fifteen minutes, then stick again for three hours. The hellish day contained times when most of the castaways and convoy crew were so exhausted that they would gladly have collapsed on the sand and died.

These recurring crises threw a light on Captain Smith that the castaways had not seen before. From the start they had sensed that somewhere in the man a streak of stubbornness was responsible for his feat in getting the convoy through to Skeleton Coast. They saw it emerge now in the guise of bullying tactics.

Striding from one bogged-down truck to another, he made sarcastic criticisms that enraged, amused and stimulated superhuman effort.

Turning from one group of sweating, exhausted men to the next, he accused them of wasting his time.

Why he wasn't struck that day was simply because nobody had the energy to spare. Yet, when the convoy was moving once more, an expression often heard was: "Thank God for Smith!"

Mrs. Saad-Moussa, wearing a fixed smile as she gripped the overhead strap, wasn't the only one to dread the short spurts forward from one sand trap to the next. The constant jolting threw her companions off their seats and on to the floor.

When darkness fell the survivors, whose bodies were already stiff, tender and sore from their long ordeal on the beach, felt bruised all over again. Gloom set in when they learned of the day's meagre accomplishment.

Their total efforts since morning had advanced the convoy only six miles.

Physical exhaustion had a beneficial effect on young Jones, the steward's boy, however. He seemed to have recovered fully from his mental "confusion," as Dr. Wood called it, and did his share of hard work along with the older men.

As the convoy was about to halt for the day, it happened that Jones was trudging ahead in the near-darkness searching out a stretch of firm sand for the last few yards of the day's run. He stopped. At his feet lay a small, round object that looked like a boulder. He picked it up to clear the path—and dropped it with a yell that brought others hurrying.

Wood elbowed his way to the trembling boy. Examining the "boulder" he turned to the questioning crowd.

"The beach is full of human bones," he said quietly, "but this is the first skull I've seen here."

The grim discovery made Jones's hallucinations about cannibals return, and Hutchinson had to calm him with an injection of hyoscine and luminal.

The injection should have allowed everyone to sleep soundly that evening. This would have happened had it not been for an event about midnight. For the first time since the castaways landed on Skeleton Coast, it rained.

In a matter of minutes each vehicle was crowded to suffocation with hot, panting bodies seeking shelter.

It rained the entire night—hard.

Even at breakfast the next morning nobody seemed entirely awake. Then suddenly the sky was washed blue, the sun dried the brown sand a dazzling white and the eight trucks began to creak forward.

At Smith's request Davies joined him in scouting ahead on foot to signal back what seemed to be the best and most solid route for the convoy to follow. Sometimes they suggested short stretches of upthrust rock so jagged that, even when barely crawling, the lorries had to stop frequently to give the women a rest.

Mrs. Saad-Moussa suffered the most, yet at each halt her smile reappeared. Two other passengers, Mrs. Alice Taylor and Mrs. Dorcas Whitworth, worried increasingly over the mother-to-be. Finally they told Smith that she would have to have longer periods of rest, and more of them. He shook his head. His argument was that the sooner they got her to Rocky Point the quicker she would be back in civilization. He added: "I'll appoint you ladies to keep special watch over her. Will you let me know at once if there's any emergency?"

The older men were glad to ride with the women when the going was good enough for riding. Even Dr. Wood consented to save his strength wherever possible. But nobody could hold him back when there was digging-out to be done. They gave up trying.

In the late afternoon Smith, walking painfully ahead as usual, chose a route near the water's edge. A tiny cove, completely sheltered by sand dunes, gave Mrs. Taylor's seventeen-year-old daughter Annabel an idea which she passed on to her mother. Mrs. Taylor agreed with enthusiasm.

This was just the sort of place they had been watching out for. It wasn't hard to persuade Smith to pitch camp there for the night so that all the women could take leisurely, much-needed baths in the sea.

"Mind the undertow," he warned.

A minute later hilarious shrieks rose above the din of the surf as the bathers lay flat in the shallows and let themselves be drenched by curling waves that crashed down on them.

Five minutes was enough. They reappeared breathless and exhilarated.

While the soldiers made camp and examined their battered trucks, other men—passengers and crew—took their turn at splashing in the sea.

A mild cheer went up when the assistant purser, Ernest Johnston, marked in the sand: DAY'S RUN APPROX. 12 MILES.

But there were still more than sixty miles to go. . . .

When the journey began again, the first quarter of an hour brought a surprise. Smith led the way across volcanic lava. This terrain had the advantage of hardness if nothing else.

Bouncing and bumping, the lorries kept hurling into the air everybody except the tight-lipped Mrs. Saad-Moussa, who patiently balanced on her mattresses and clung to the strap.

With Smith's frequent cry, "You're wasting my time, gentlemen—get out and dig," the convoy made good progress.

During one halt in the terrible mid-afternoon heat, Annabel Taylor, half-standing in the leading vehicle and staring ahead over the driver's shoulder, suddenly pointed. "Those sticks in the distance—what are they? They're moving."

"They look like giraffes to me, miss," said the driver. "We saw a lot of them on the way up here."

When Annabel tried to point them out to Smith, they had vanished.

"If they *were* giraffes," said Smith excitedly, "they probably dropped down out of sight in a dry river bed. And that river bed must be the Khumib."

It was the Khumib, and the bed was covered with deep sand drifts. The banks on either side were very precipitous.

Although Smith managed to find the places where slopes had been cut down the banks on the previous journey, further laborious digging was needed to make them less steep.

The passengers dismounted. Then the eight vehicles, one after the other, sped down the nearest slope, wallowed across the crackling, snapping brush, climbed the opposite slope and stopped with radiators steaming.

When the passengers had picked their way cautiously across the river bed and rejoined the lorries, Smith observed: "We're now only about

CHANGE—3

To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.

John Henry Newman

twelve miles from Rocky Point. Tomorrow we'll be near the wreck of the Sir Charles Elliott—if there's anything left of it by now."

There was little talk at supper. The castaways' thoughts were on the following day. If a plane had managed to land at Rocky Point and pick up the shipwrecked tugmen, there was reasonable hope that this feat could be repeated. If, on the other hand, the tugmen were still there, the only alternative was a 650-mile tortuous journey by foot and lorry to Windhoek with the tugmen as extra passengers.

Wood was scooping out a sleeping-hole in the sand when he heard his name being called excitedly. "Dr. Wood! Dr. Wood!"

It was Mrs. Taylor. "Mrs. Saad-Moussa is ill," she said.

Hutchinson hurried up and the two doctors went to where Mrs. Whitworth was nursing Mrs. Saad-Moussa's head in her lap, and calmly questioning her between spells of retching. When Mrs. Saad-Moussa mumbled about pieces of chocolate she had eaten, Dr. Wood asked: "Is that all?"

"And emergency rations, from a lifeboat," said Mrs. Saad-Moussa. "They were stale, I suppose, and I ate too much. But you've no idea how starved I've been."

Wood turned to Hutchinson with relief. "Doctor," he said, "I think some plain bicarbonate is all the patient needs."

His homely diagnosis proved sound. Soon the mother-to-be was quietly asleep.

Next morning, after about six miles, Smith, who was walking well ahead of the leading lorry, rounded a dune and stopped.

"There she is!" he shouted, pointing out beyond the surf.

It was the Sir Charles Elliott. The sturdy little tug was still upright, at the spot where she had run aground. Spray pounded her superstructure, slowly battering her to pieces.

The castaways dismounted to look at this melancholy spectacle, then climbed aboard again, anxious to reach Rocky Point and find what was in store for them.

Suddenly Smith, riding beside the driver of the leading lorry, turned and shouted to those behind: "If I remember right, Rocky Point is behind that high range of dunes."

The castaways peered out, anxious for their first glimpse of Rocky Point. Everything depended on whether a plane could land there.

When the convoy stopped, Naude got out and walked a short distance to inspect his surroundings. A haze covered the sand. For a while he stood alone, feet apart and arms folded, an experienced flier sizing up Rocky Point as a landing-field.

Finally he turned and started back towards the convoy, shaking his head as he went.

When Naude, accompanied by Smith and a group of other men started out on a second inspection, the haze was suddenly swept away by a fresh sea breeze, and the Point was revealed in detail.

Set back seventy yards from the water and running parallel to it, Rocky Point was in fact a ridge sloping gradually towards the sea on one side, and falling away sharply on the other, making a drop of eighty feet to the dunes below. The crest of the ridge, an average of forty yards wide, offered the only level stretch of sand for miles around on which a plane might conceivably land and take off.

Naude was more concerned about the length than the width. He climbed the ridge and paced its length—twice to make sure. The others looked on silently.

"How long is it?" Smith called.

"Seven hundred yards."

"Didn't you once say that a Ventura bomber needs a thousand yards?"

There was a pause. "An airman," Naude countered, slowly, "doesn't always get what he wants or needs, any more than a seaman does."

"You mean," asked Mrs. Whitworth, coming up anxiously, "that there's no chance at all of a plane landing?"

"Well," said Naude, "apparently one plane did. The tugmen aren't here—and there are wheelmarks on the top of the ridge."

"That settles it," cried Smith triumphantly.

This almost certainty of rescue after so many days of hardship and despair had different effects on the castaways. Many began to talk excitedly; others sat on the sand, looking stunned. Mrs. Saad-Moussa, who was clinging to Mrs. Taylor with one arm, and to Mrs. Whitworth with the other, broke down and sobbed with relief.

The convoy waited for a plane to come . . . and waited.

As the sun rose higher, the castaways crawled into the welcome shade of the lorries. The liner's cook prepared a sketchy meal which was eaten without enthusiasm.

It was not until the afternoon that a distant hum was heard, coming from the south. The castaways ran out into the open, shielding their eyes from the glare.

A twin-engined Ventura bomber was approaching from the direction of Walvis Bay. The castaways cheered as it skimmed over the ridge, making a dummy run at a landing.

"It's Major Matt Uys!" shouted Naude, recognizing his flight commander's aircraft. "It's not the narrowness of the ridge that's worrying him. The trouble is the crosswind coming in from the sea. He has got to hold her dead straight until she stops, otherwise she'll be blown sideways over the cliff."

The castaways, fascinated, watched the plane make another approach. It dropped lower and lower. Suddenly the landing wheels flicked the sand. The plane bounced into the air, came down one hundred yards farther on and stopped—ten yards from the end of the runway.

Mrs. Taylor turned to Mrs. Whitworth. "It's like a dream," she murmured. "And I hope I don't wake up."

After the reunion between Naude and Uys, during which the latter explained that he would have come sooner but was delayed by fog, twenty-two of the castaways, including Mrs. Saad-Moussa and the young mother and her baby, were organized into a couple of groups. Each was for one of the two flights back to Walvis Bay that Uys was to attempt before dark.

Dr. Wood tried to exclude himself, saying that he planned to continue overland with the convoy. "Smith still has seventeen men from the Dunedin Star, besides his own truck crews and the natives," he said. "He'll be lucky to get through without injuries. I'll be needed."

Nevertheless, the brave and obstinate doctor was firmly overruled and allocated to the second flight.

First the plane took aboard the six women, the baby, Naude and his fellow-airmen. These, plus Uys and the bomber's crew, made a total of fourteen—as heavy a load as Uys was willing to risk on such a short and treacherous runway.

Uys revved up his engines. The plane started sluggishly along the narrow ridge. The engines roared louder. The plane gained speed. Faster, faster it bumped along. There could be no faltering now—no error of judgment. Skilfully using his controls, Uys countered the crosswind that was trying to push him over the cliff to port.

His engines, going all out at last, seemed unable to lift the heavy plane. Then, when the end of the runway was only a few yards off, the watchers by the lorries caught a flash of daylight between the wheels and the sand. The next instant the bomber, wholly airborne now, was streaking southward at last.

The bomber was not designed to carry passengers. There was nowhere to sit, nor enough headroom to stand. In the cargo space where the passengers crouched there were no windows, no ventilation. The roar of the engines was deafening. Breath-taking bumps, as the plane dropped into the air pockets common above that hot, uneven country, made some of the women airsick.

The two-hour flight was misery for the passengers, but Uys, bearing in mind Mrs. Saad-Moussa's condition, landed at Walvis Bay so gently that the wheels were hardly felt to touch the ground.

When the plane stopped, it was very still inside, but outside men were cheering, and soon Naude and his three airmen were helping the women down to the ground. These efforts brought feminine exclamations.

"Wait! My leg's gone to sleep."

"Here, take my baby, somebody."

The women stood blinking in the sun, dazed by the success of the flight. That they had been rescued from Skeleton Coast was too much for them to understand at once. Rescue had eluded them so often. It *couldn't* be true.

Mrs. Saad-Moussa whispered: "Thank God."

While the women went into a small civilian hospital to begin a few days' recuperation, Uys refuelled and headed back to Rocky Point to pick up Dr. Wood and ten other castaways.

On arrival at Walvis Bay, Dr. Wood went into hospital, too, but the next morning he was out of bed, insisting on making a five-hour flight to his home in Cape Town. He spent six weeks there, gaining strength, then was off again for further war service. When his family next heard from him, he was taking part in the invasion of Sicily.

Captain Smith and his convoy, after seeing the survivors off by plane, ploughed through floods and torrential rain to a little settlement named Otjiwarongo, where he was ordered to relinquish his command and go to his own headquarters at nearby Omaruru. "Goodbye, gentlemen," he said to the soldiers with a grin. "Now I'm wasting *your* time."

While the convoy moved on towards Windhoek, which it reached just before Christmas, Smith arrived at his home ragged and barefoot. An hour later, an assistant found him at his office, typing a report of his astonishing 1,500-mile trip, while his feet soaked in a tub of hot water which he had placed under his desk.

The gallant part he had played in the Dunedin Star disaster wrecked his health and eventually forced him to resign from the police force.

In January, 1943, Captain Naude was sent back to the wreck of the Dunedin Star to salvage important items of cargo. He was put in charge of an overland expedition of twenty-seven men, seven trucks and a three and a half ton tractor rushed from Cape Town. They reached the scene of the wreck in nine days, where the tractor made short work of pulling Naude's bomber out of the sand. After the plane was overhauled, Naude and two mechanics managed to take off for Walvis Bay.

They had flown but a short distance beyond Rocky Point when the starboard engine caught fire, the right wing crumpled and the plane nose-dived into the sea. Naude received a severe blow on the head and a badly hurt leg; the other men somewhat less serious injuries. Half-drowned, all three finally drifted ashore on the fuselage of their aircraft. Slowly, painfully, they made their way towards Rocky Point. The homeward-bound convoy spotted them, by the merest chance, and took them to hospital at Windhoek.

Naude's injuries, coupled with exhaustion and worry over the Dunedin Star affair, ruined his health. A few months later he was honourably discharged from the air force as medically unfit.

Mrs. Saad-Moussa completed her journey to Egypt in another ship, and as far as is known her child was born there.

Captain Robert Lee, of the Dunedin Star, left the Blue Star Line soon after returning to England and died some years later; Davies eventually became master of a new, slightly smaller Dunedin Star, but has since left her.

Senior Cadet Jimmy Thompson, now Captain Thompson, followed the sea for several years, but today has a shore job in Britain with a well-known petroleum firm.

Jones, the steward's boy, got back to Britain, where he received mental treatment. Many other members of the Dunedin Star's crew, however, died when their ships were torpedoed later in the war.

The total cost of the Dunedin Star disaster was the health of a score or more people, the lives of the two members of the tug's crew, the tug itself (worth £20,000), several lorries abandoned or wrecked beyond repair, a bomber (worth £30,000) and the 13,000-ton Dunedin Star and her cargo, which ranged from shells and torpedoes to armoured cars and tanks, and was valued at £100,000.

Of the Dunedin Star, little or nothing now remains. Only rusting plates, constantly washed by the rolling surf, mark the most extraordinary rescue story of Skeleton Coast.

THE END

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"Skeleton Coast," by John Marsh and Lyman Anson, will be published as a book by Hodder and Stoughton in November, price 16s.

CHANGE—4

Change is an easy panacea.
It takes character to stay in
one place and be happy there.

Elizabeth Dunn

"Darling, I have a surprise for you"

Yes—we can banish the rocket

Continued from page 7

this might have been done if agreement on it had been reached ten years ago.

There remains the possibility of trying to control production of the rocket itself. Its outer casing has to satisfy a number of exacting requirements. Apart from mechanical strength, it must be able to withstand the high temperatures that are generated when the rocket re-enters the earth's atmosphere on its downward journey.

The frame of the rocket must also be as light as possible. These requirements have been met by developing a range of alloys using metals which until recently were unknown outside the chemist's laboratory. Production of these rare metals could be controlled.

They are, however, now finding numerous uses in industry. For example, metals able to resist high temperatures without losing their mechanical properties are needed in high-speed cutting tools and in jet engines.

There would always be the possibility of a diversion of metal from a legitimate industrial activity for the illegal manufacture of rockets. Thus, although the rocket casing still offers some opportunities for control, these are likely to grow less as time goes on.

Nor does it seem likely that rocket production can be effectively controlled through the fuel that is used. The longer-range rockets all use liquid propellants, which is the way the V2s of the last war were driven.

All these fuels are made in large quantities for industrial uses, and to control their production seems to be impossible.

Quite recently even more powerful fuels have been developed and one of them, Hidyne, was used to power the Jupiter rocket which launched the first American satellite Explorer. These use high-energy compounds of boron, like diborane and pentaborane. Since these fuels are used only to power rockets. it may be that an efficient system of control could be developed for them.

As the quantities which have been manufactured increase, however, any control system will encounter the same difficulties which at present exist in the case of fissile materials.

Other propulsion systems have been suggested, such as photon or plasma jets, but they have yet to be worked out in detail and are so far in the future that they cannot be usefully discussed. This is also true of nuclear-powered rockets, which, in spite of the difficulties in achieving a workable design, may well ultimately replace chemical rockets.

Production of the rocket engine itself offers little opportunity for control. The components are similar to those manufactured in large numbers for jet engines. But as the engines become more efficient they will need more exotic materials to withstand the even higher temperatures, and it may well be that development along these lines will open up new possibilities of inspection and control.

There is another more promising field. The engines are extremely difficult to design, and to evolve a working prototype needs a large number of tests. These are carried out on the ground on test beds equipped with elaborate measuring instruments. The engines are noisy things to test and not easy to conceal, so that the control of ground testing might offer a line of attack to the problem.

In addition, the test firing of a rocket itself cannot easily be carried out secretly. It would be visible over a large area. But it would need a few dozen radar stations to keep track of test firing in a large country.

All of these possible methods of control present difficulties. It is with the instruments used in the guidance mechanism that an inspection system may most effectively be able to control rocket production.

Standards of efficiency required in these instruments are very high, owing to the accuracy with which the rocket must be guided. If it is to be sent five thousand miles and land within a mile of the target, its velocity—in the region of ten thousand miles per hour—has to be correct to within about one mile per hour and its direction correct to within about a hundredth of a degree.

This needs instruments of unparalleled accuracy, yet they must be light and small and be able to operate under the severe conditions inside a rapidly accelerating rocket.

Only a few craftsmen are able to produce such instruments and they must be equipped with the most accurate machine tools and work in ideal, dust-free and vibration-free conditions. The tolerances for some of the metal parts, the ball-bearings for example, are only a few millionths of an inch, and this means in practice that most of those that are made fail to satisfy the exacting test procedures.

Controlling the rocket weapon is, therefore, not as hopeless as it might seem. A threatened attack would need about a hundred inter-continental rockets before it could be more than a bluff. The manufacture of this number of rockets, in view of all the delicate components they contain, would be a major industrial task that could not escape the notice of an efficient inspectorate.

The special areas on which the inspectorate would need to concentrate are the testing of the rocket motors on the ground and of complete rockets in the air, and the manufacture of high-precision gyroscopes and accelerometers.

Of lesser importance would be control of the production of boron fuels and some of the rarer heat-resisting metals and alloys.

To do this effectively in a modern industrial country would need an inspectorate of a few hundred men. This is easily practicable. The inspectors would need considerable experience to be able to recognize suspicious activities and to be in touch with the latest research developments.

They would also need to be able to anticipate new methods of producing important rocket components. But it is unlikely that such developments will make it more difficult to control the rocket: they will more likely make it easier. THE END

Contrast

I went to the lake when spring time was mellow,
I waded through fringes of heart-warming yellow,
Celandine, iris and marsh marigold,
Hawkweed and coltsfoot and buttercup bold,
And the water was clear and excitingly cold.

I went to the lake when summer was high,
I stood on the shore but I left with a sigh,
For who wants to wade through banana skins,
Floating cartons and jagged tins?
Oh why can't they put their litter in bins?

AILSA FRANKLIN

The liveliest trickster on the beach

Continued from page 14

does not stretch with growth. Therefore, even large crabs have to be continually moulting. This does not mean shedding their covering by bits, but getting out of it completely—legs, claws, everything—in one operation.

After the moult the crab leaves behind it what looks exactly like another crab, the only difference being that it is hollow and split on the underside. At first sight this seems an impossible feat. When a crab is served at table, the claw shells have to be broken to get the meat out. Yet the crab has to withdraw the bulky flesh through the narrow joints intact.

It is able to do this because its flesh is semi-fluid, not set as it becomes after boiling. Nevertheless, the operation is difficult and dangerous and many crabs rupture their limbs and die from bleeding. Even after a successful moult the crab is still in peril. Soft flesh has taken the place of hard shell, and before the outside covering hardens the crab will be at the mercy of any marauder.

If an enemy seizes a crab by a claw or leg, the limb breaks off and the crab scuttles away to safety. In due course a new limb grows, but the original must be broken at the right spot, and a special place is provided by nature.

This is a joint near the body containing a passage for the blood vessels so small that when the joint is severed a blood clot can form, preventing further bleeding. If a limb is broken at any other place the crab usually bleeds to death.

A crab's replacement ability is amazing. Its eyes are on stalks and composed of several thousand lenses connected to the ganglia at the base by an equal number of nerve rods. Yet if these eyes are cut off they grow again, complete with the full number of new lenses and new nerve rods. There is one proviso; the nerve ganglia at the base of the stalk must not be cut. If it is, no new eye will grow.

Crabs adopt some extraordinary devices to protect themselves. Sponges are usually avoided by sea dwellers, because in their natural state most of them are covered with hard spikes and have an offensive smell.

A crab named Dromia, living in warmer seas than ours, takes advantage of this and uses a sponge as camouflage *and* protection. It takes a large sponge, cuts and trims it to the right size, places it on its back and holds it down with its hindmost pair of legs, rather as a woman holds a large hat on a windy day. The two legs are permanently employed clamping down the sponge.

Among sea dwellers the beautiful sea anemone is even more unpopular than the sponge: it bears stinging tendrils. So a certain cunning crab, the *melia tessellata*, which possesses claws too small to be of use against enemies, picks two anemones and, holding one in each claw, carries them about and by them can ward off attacks or intimidate its foes. This is not all. These anemones, in spite of their name and appearance, are animals and catch their own small prey. Some of this food the crab detaches for its own use.

There is another way in which anemones can serve crabs. The deep sea is a region of perpetual night. In this darkness many creatures have acquired the power of emitting light, just as glow-worms and fireflies do on land. One of these is an anemone, which is plucked and carried by some deep sea crabs to serve, among its other uses, as a torch.

Indeed there is a kind of partnership between crabs and anemones. The common hermit crab, which can be seen by the dozen at the seaside, tumbling among the pebbles at the sea edge, has two protections: its armed fore-parts, and the empty shell it has purloined, which it drags about behind it to protect its soft rear-parts, and into which it retires in case of danger.

The double protection of the hermit crab, however, entails a double risk, for not only must it moult after the manner of all crabs, but it must change its shell from time to time as it grows. This means leaving the old shell and searching unprotected for another, bigger one. At these times the mortality among hermit crabs is very high. If the crab survives, it transfers the anemone from the old shell to the new.

Many crabs have taken to a land existence, living far from the sea up in the hills and making burrows like rabbits. Like rabbits, too, they sometimes damage crops, and some will climb trees and bushes and take nestlings or half-grown birds which they tear to pieces and devour.

THERE are no crabs of this kind in Britain, and even those which are completely adapted to land life usually breed in the sea, and make an annual pilgrimage to do so. They gather in armies and, with their armour rattling as they move, march to the sea, overrunning most obstacles in their way, including, at times, human habitations.

After their eggs have hatched in the sea they return to their hilly fastnesses. Later their young also leave the sea, clustering in masses on the rocks after undergoing the same larval changes as the young of sea crabs.

The species of crab used for the table is largely a matter of fashion. In Britain only one species (*Cancer pagurus*) is now considered edible, but years ago the ordinary Shore Crab (*Carcinus maenas*) was *the* edible crab, and nobody would look at anything else. It is still the favourite crab on the Continent.

Actually all crabs are edible. When I first went to Harbin in Northern Manchuria I got the shock of my life when I told the cook to order a crab. When it was laid on the kitchen table, its legs trailed along the floor. It looked like something out of a nightmare.

This particular crab came from Vladivostok and was the only food crab known in those parts. The proper title of the species is the Giant Japanese Crab, the largest of all crabs. There is enough meat in its legs alone to feed six hungry men. It is the meat from the legs of this crab that is contained in the Russian and Japanese tins often sold in British shops.

A formidable enemy of the crab is the octopus. This highly intelligent creature, in spite of the tales of horror-writers, is rarely larger than a plate, and is of a very timid disposition. Occasionally it invades the English Channel and plays havoc with crabs and lobsters. Some forty years ago octopuses well-nigh ruined the English lobster-fishing industry.

A more dangerous enemy, because it is ever-present, is the whelk, the rat of the sea. It wanders about eating whatever it can pick up and in its searches frequently gets into crab and lobster pots and destroys all the occupants.

Its mouth parts are equipped with a rasp that can bore holes into the hard shells of oysters and scallops. All it has to do then is to suck out the contents.

There is a tiny crab called the Oyster Crab which has a novel way of eluding its enemies. It goes into partnership with an oyster or a mussel. When the oyster lies with its shells open—its normal position—the crab plays about outside, but when danger threatens it dashes inside. This warns the oyster, which promptly snaps shut.

While inside, the crab shares the oyster's food and the two live comfortably together. THE END

Will this new blood save the Lords?

Continued from page 11

around, walked across to consult the janitor, returned, and whispered my name into the ear of his neighbour, whom I heard remarking, "I must try and have a word with him after the debate."

By then I realized that I had sat down in error among the scant Liberal peers, and that this was their leader, hoping perhaps for a new recruit. I sidled unobtrusively out, returning a few moments later to find an obscure seat, far up on the opposite side of the House.

Such are the manners of Their Lordships and their lordly attendants. Their official deliberations are quite as polite. A debate in the Commons can often be a noisy and even stormy affair. Cheers and jeers and groans and taunts are flung from one side of the House to the other.

No such unseemly things happen in their Lordships' House. There is no need for a Speaker to keep the peace, the Lord Chancellor on his Woolsack being merely an observer, technically outside the House—and often indeed engaged in his own correspondence, strewn over the cushions around him. There are no Rules of Order to enforce, Their Lordships being considered so well-behaved as not to need them. For they are order personified.

Nor do they, in the strict sense of the word, debate. In the Commons there is no prearranged programme. Members must catch the Speaker's eye. Under his auspices one speech tends to follow spontaneously on another, taking up its points and replying to them, the ball going backwards and forwards, now fast, now slow, in a lively and often exciting contest of words and feelings.

In the Lords there is no such spontaneity. The order of the speakers is planned—and typed out for the convenience of members—before the debate begins.

Their Lordships engage less in a debate than in a series of talks. Excesses of enthusiasm are frowned upon, emotions controlled. Applause is discouraged, interruptions almost unknown.

The House was more shocked than amused when the late Lord Birkenhead was distinctly heard from the Woolsack to liken two noble lords to the Dolly Sisters of politics.

Looking around me from my inherited but unmerited place on the red

benches I see an assembly composed largely of middle-aged gentlemen, with a few veterans and a few young ones trying to look older than their years.

They are for the most part well-dressed, the Socialists if anything more correctly than the Tories, though the days are gone when Lord Curzon expelled the eldest son of a peer, seated according to his right on the steps of the Throne, for wearing a light-coloured suit.

Nor are stiff collars the rule, as they used to be. It marked the end of an epoch when the late Lord Crewe, who had for a generation graced the Liberal front bench in an impeccably starched choker of a collar, inches high, appeared on the day following the outbreak of war wearing a soft one.

The speeches these gentlemen are making are urbane in manner, rotund in phrase, and interlarded with elaborate courtesies. Many of them start with an apology for speaking at all, and proceed with another apology for disagreeing with an adversary, or more likely a compliment to him for the excellence of his speech.

Compared to the Commons this is a somewhat torpid atmosphere. It is easy enough to believe the legend of a late Duke of Devonshire, who once had a nightmare that he was addressing the House of Lords, and then he woke up to discover that he actually was.

The House of Lords has some 875 members. Twenty years ago it had 775. At this rate its numbers will be up to a thousand in twenty years' time. This indeed sounds an elephantine assembly. But in fact not many more than a hundred members regularly attend its sittings.

THE Chamber used to seat three hundred peers, but since postwar reconstruction it seats only two hundred.

Of the remaining six or seven hundred about a third do not trouble even to take the Oath, entitling them to sit in a new session, while the rest, so-called the "backwoods peers," attend very rarely.

The House of Lords has been called an anachronism, and this it certainly is in the sense that four-fifths of its members hardly ever go near it. But since Their Lordships are anxious to survive as a legislative body—only one of them in the recent debates spoke in favour of its abolition—they have now made a new Standing Order requiring peers to attend the sittings as often as possible, and if they cannot to obtain leave of absence, thus voluntarily excluding themselves for a session.

This experiment may be the thin end of a wedge which in the long run, when a later stage of reform comes to be discussed, excludes them altogether. Meanwhile it serves to rationalize the existing situation, by which the House is in practice a small compact working body of some hundred regular members.

As such it is not to be scorned. More than half of this "hard core" is composed of new peers, who might just as well be life peers. Most of them are former members of the House of Commons, thus men who have devoted their careers to the problems of politics.

The rest, apart from the bishops, may come from the services—ex-generals, admirals, air marshals, ambassadors, colonial governors, civil servants; from industry, commerce, medicine, science, the universities, the law; and from the landed classes.

The House, for all its illogicalities, is at its best a panel or reservoir of experts, such as the House of Commons, composed to an increasing extent of professional politicians, can seldom be.

The tempo of Their Lordships' debate may be slow, but at least it is sure. Their views tend to be disinterested. They do not have to play to the gallery, which is usually empty, nor to the press, which is usually absent. They have no constituents outside to remind of their existence.

Above all they do tend to know what they are talking about. Both from among their regular and from among their occasional attendants, they can furnish first-hand knowledge on any subject from forestry to atomic energy, from industrial psychology to art.

In specific terms this knowledge is applied to legislation, sent up from the Commons for revision and, as it were, completion. Clauses are examined and clarified which the Commons has barely had time to consider, so that Bills may reach the Statue Book in a greatly improved form.

Lord Samuel likened the House to "a sounding-board through which even a whisper can reach the whole nation." If it is to be so it must be kept up to date. It must bring in new blood. It must evolve. The new measures may not achieve this. But they are a step towards it.

Already the House of Lords has come far since the day, not so very long ago, when a peer from the country attended for the first time in years. Flushed with wine after luncheon, and swaying a little, he entered the chamber, caught sight of a benchful of bishops, arrayed in lawn sleeves and cassocks, stopped short and was heard muttering to himself with astonishment: "Women, by Gad!" THE END

They're tearing your home to bits

Continued from page 15

as far as paying for an option on the process before asking Ellis to check the claims. The German, suave and fast-talking, received Ellis in a luxuriously-furnished country house and ushered him into a library containing expensively-bound books on bacteriology. "I knew he was a fake straight away," Ellis says. "He was too quick to produce the burgundy and too slow to produce the bacteria. Besides, his reference books were too immaculate. The sample I finally made him show me was mainly resin. It should not have fooled a schoolboy."

Investigations into an alleged process for maturing wine artificially took Ellis to almost every capital in Europe. This time a lot of the evidence was impressive, but scientific caution made him advise his client, a wealthy hotel group, against investing in the invention. Although the process has not been heard of since, Ellis has never been quite sure whether he made the right decision.

A man in Cornwall once sent him a strange-looking white mixture in a sauce bottle together with a letter claiming that his flowers grew amazingly well after being treated with the liquid. Tests showed that it was merely water, chalk and sand.

To test the degree of air pollution near power stations, Ellis sites rain-water traps in the area and examines the contents periodically.

An industrial firm has commissioned him to make tests in an area where a large factory will be built in 1959. By the time it is in operation Ellis will have a comprehensive set of figures covering air pollution in the vicinity for something like three years. If residents complain when the factory is operating, Ellis will be able to compare figures before and after and give the facts.

When a member of Ellis's twenty-strong laboratory staff went to change test bottles in the area of a power station recently a furious housewife assailed him across her garden fence. Sulphur dioxide from the chimneys, brought down as acid in a shower of rain, had burned holes in the nylons on her washing line. She thought that the chemist was responsible.

Another time a tile manufacturer blamed a nearby power station when more than a thousand white tiles, outside in their palettes to harden before glazing, were ruined by minute flecks of soot. Ellis was asked to test the soot to confirm that it came from the continuously smoking chimneys. He exonerated the power station. The smuts were wood ash. Their origin was traced to a wood yard where a small quantity of scrap wood had been burned. The owner had to pay compensation.

Ellis was once asked to heat a consignment of mining explosives to within two degrees fahrenheit of exploding point before making detonating tests on his sandbagged explosives range. He knew that he could not rely on his ovens to maintain a temperature so steady that it would not stray a couple of degrees one way or the other. "I had visions of the laboratories being blown apart, but it is against my principles to turn down assignments," he says.

He overcame the problem by devising a highly sensitive fuse which would burn out and cut off the heat immediately it rose above the required temperature. "All the same, I was very glad when the explosive had been cooked and safely detonated."

Ellis's helmet-testing expert, Vic Woods, visits factories, buys helmets at random in shops, and, for a spot check, has even stopped motor-cyclists on the roads.

One man he stopped was indignant when Woods told him that his helmet was useless. "I work in the factory where it was made," he said. "I'll show you how strong it is." Without further argument he put the helmet on the ground and jumped on it. It squashed completely under his weight.

Three out of every two hundred crash helmets manufactured are tested to destruction under Ministry of Transport laws. Ellis estimates that Woods has destroyed 24,000 in the past five years.

The range of subjects Ellis applies his tests to is almost endless. He and his staff checked samples of every material used in the B.O.A.C. hangar at London Airport.

When plaster began to fall from the ceiling of a new house, tests showed that plasterers had put too much water and lime in the mix to retard its fixing properties and so give them time to work at a slower pace. A manufacturer of plastic lavatory seats blamed the tenants when the fittings began to crack on a council estate, until Ellis walked off with a couple of the seats under his arm and sent the council an adverse report a few days later. His test results were confirmed when a number of unused seats from the original purchase were discovered also cracked in store.

Some of the problems he is asked to solve have stupidly simple answers. One worried man said that a horde of strange red spiders had suddenly appeared and was eating away the bricks of his house. Ellis discovered that the spider was a common insect which lives in soil. It had been disturbed when the man had turned his garden for the first time in many years. The bricks were a particularly soft type and the insect had run into the cracks.

When Ellis, whose one mild concession to flamboyance is a liking for high-powered cars, bought a fast sports model some time ago he was unable to resist a simple test to check its reputed speed. He tipped the gate-keeper of a racetrack £1 to let him do a circuit while the course was not in use. "I clocked 120 m.p.h.," he says. "A most satisfactory result." THE END

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£5 Mrs. A. Eshelby, 18a Dane Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea: Puffing And Panting—Village Brigade—*Fanned* Fire!

£5 G. W. Knopp, 18 Wolverton Road, Newport Pagnell: Not Much To Look At—Dad? Nor Is *Pitprop!*

£5 P. Stainrod, 29 Frickley Road, Sheffield: In A Woodland Glade—Car Yours? "*Carpet*" Isn't!

10 of £2 10s.

R. Bruce, 184 Tong Road, Leeds: When Mother Looks—White—Too Much *Washing!*

T. A. Hepton, 25 Cardigan Road, Headingley, Leeds: On Prosperity's Sands—*And* "Minefield," Arab Millionaires!

Mrs. V. M. Lord, College Farm, Great Bentley, Essex: When Mother Dishes—Up *Advice*, Nobody's "Hungry"!

A. L. Parsons, c/o 8 Comely Bank Gardens, Perth: One Summer Day—We *Aired* Our Deck-chairs!

A. Penhale, 16 Cowper Road, Bournemouth: If We Can Eat It—Landlady Offers *Fido* Some!

Mrs. E. A. Pixton, The Shop, High Lane, Stockport: Not Much To Look At—Now There's *More* Me!

R. Radcliffe, 72 Alexandra Street, Ashton-under-Lyne: To Get Out Of The Rut—Bought Car—Joined "*Stream*"!

J. Roberts, "Uplands Stores," Oxspring, Sheffield: With A Bigger Blast—Than Heretofore, Reaching "Hereafter"?

J. P. Roughley, 55 Sycamore Lane, Great Sankey, Warrington. Way To Be Happy—We Found—Wee *Foundling*.

Mrs. C. E. Scott, 4 Flintham Drive, Sherwood, Nottingham: Not Much To Look At—My "Brando"? *My* Brand!

100 "Double Six" Prizes and 1,500 "Good Shot" Awards have also been posted.

See this page next week for

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The Western Team
Marriage, The Teacher
In The Atomic Age
The Key Man
Do The Job Well And
Reaping The Harvest
Dreary Journey
Nursing
New To Whitehall
Tantalizing Vision
Like A Queen
With A Titanic Effort
Fair Warning
Pills, Powders, Pick-me-ups
Unsung Hero
Playing Second Fiddle
A Wizard
Patter Of The Raindrops

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above.

We Must Have....., So
The Greatest Of.....
When Dad Lost His.....
To Finish The.....
Wrestling With.....
If..... Had Wings

RULES 1. First Prize for best Bullet received; others in order of merit. The test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries 1s. per Bullet. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co/, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated September 27), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.
(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, September 13, for early news of Bullets No. 2,156 First Prize Award.)

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